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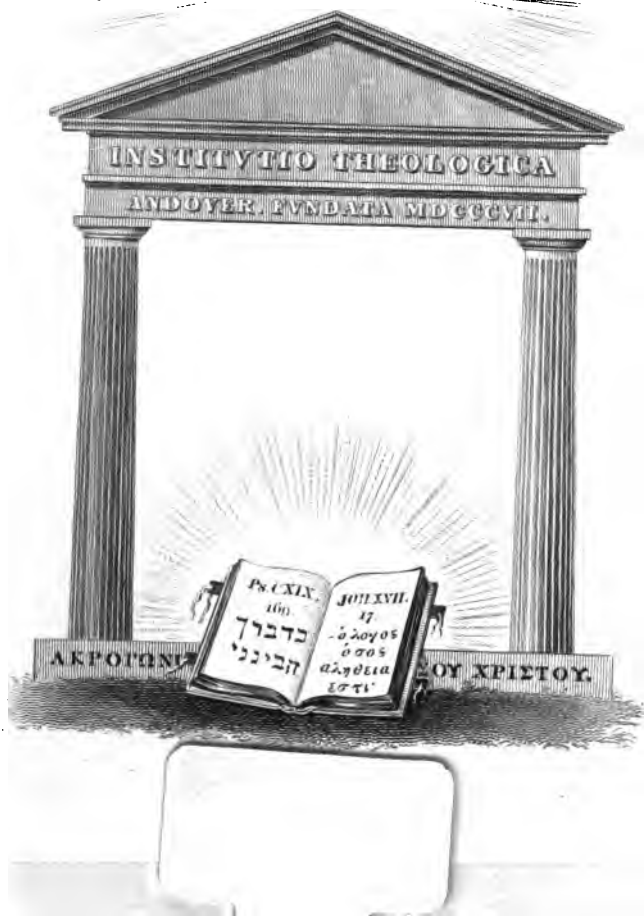
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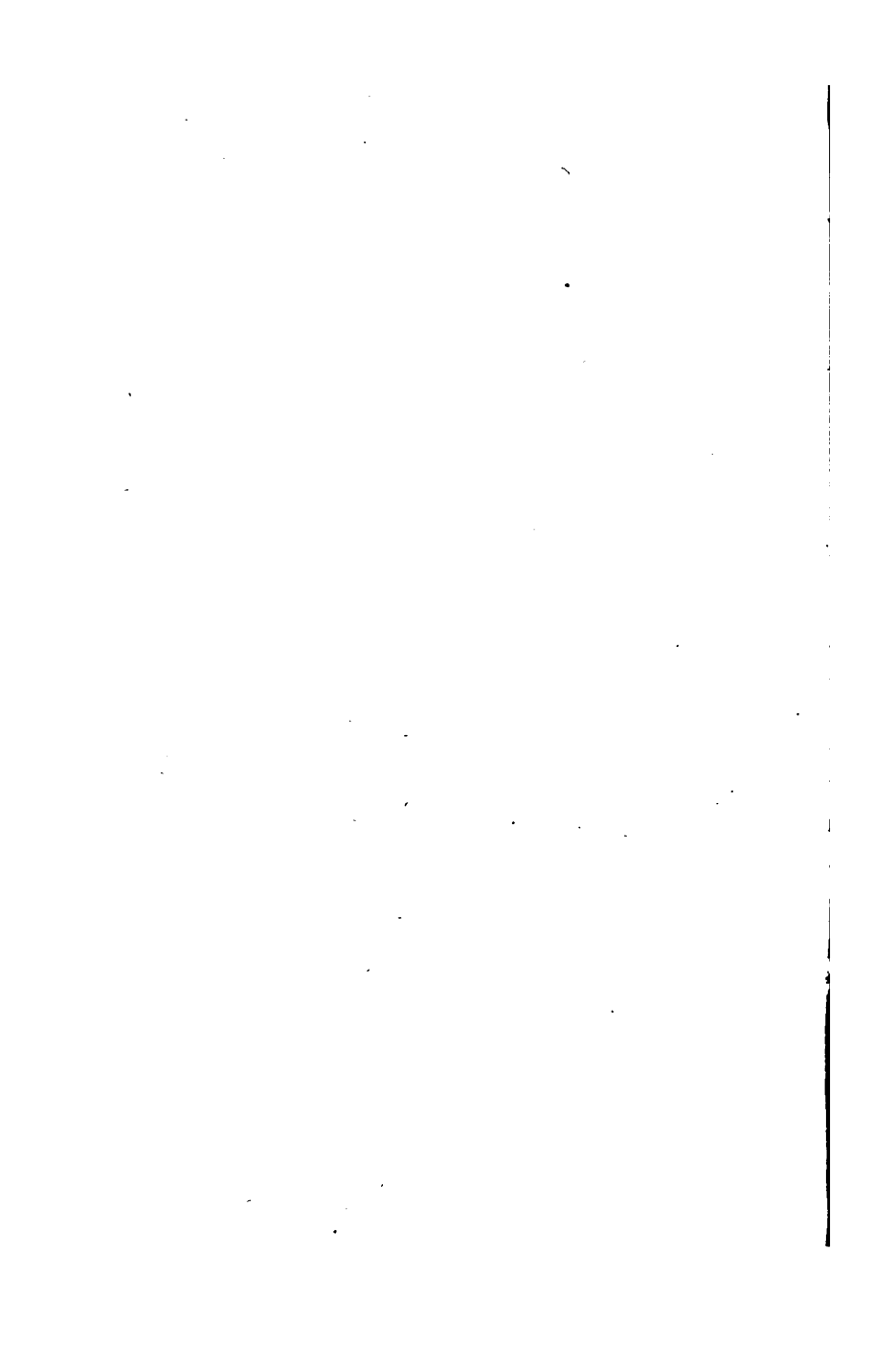
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LECTURES
TO
YOUNG PEOPLE
IN
MANUFACTURING VILLAGES.

BY DORUS CLARKE,
Pastor of the Congregational Church, Chicopee Factory Village, Springfield.

WITH
AN INTRODUCTION

BY AMOS BLANCHARD,
Pastor of the First Church in Lowell.

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TO

TIMOTHY W. CARTER, Esq.,

Agent of the Chickopee Manufacturing Company;

AND TO

GEORGE W. BUCKLAND, Esq.,

Superintendent of the Mechanical operations of the same;

THIS VOLUME,

PRIMARILY DESIGNED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE NUMEROUS

YOUTH IN THEIR EMPLOYMENT, IS, WITH MANY

SENTIMENTS OF RESPECT, GRATITUDE,

AND AFFECTION,

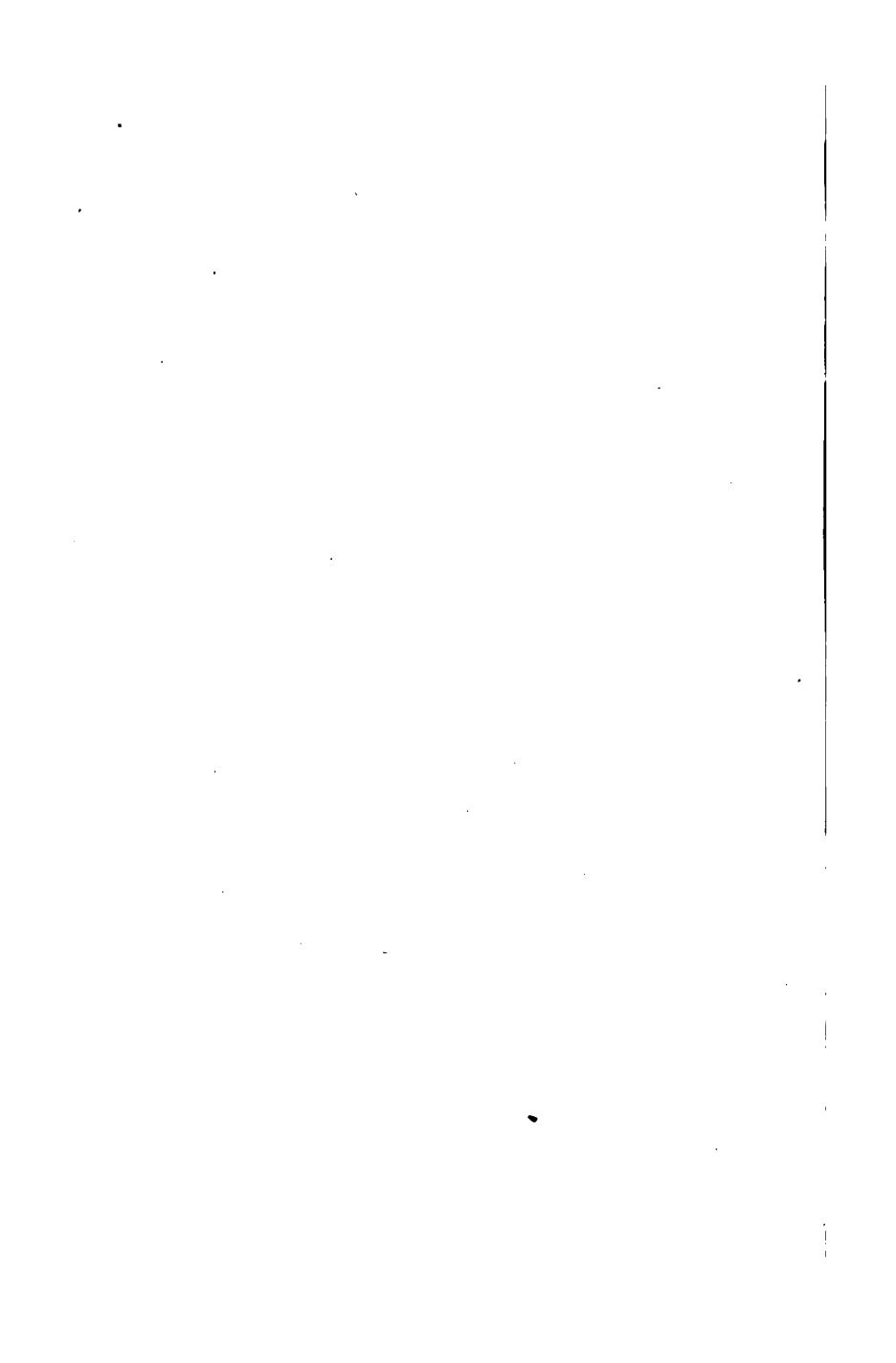
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THE following Lectures were prepared with the desire to promote the intellectual, moral and religious improvement of the young people of the author's pastoral charge ; and, at the solicitation of the young men before whom they were delivered, they are now given to the public, in the hope, that they may be useful to youth generally, but especially to the numerous and highly important class which are connected with the manufacturing establishments of the country.

SPRINGFIELD, MARCH, 1836.



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INTRODUCTION.

WITHIN comparatively a few years, a new direction has been given to a large amount of American genius, capital, and labor. Instead of the unbroken stillness of agricultural life, almost every village of New England resounds with the din of machinery ; every water-fall is laid under tribute as a centre of business and a source of wealth ; and populous towns, cities in all but the name, occupy the soil, which yesterday, as it were, scantily rewarded its partial cultivation, or was covered by the tall trees of the forest.

A corresponding change has come over the character and habits of a large portion of the people. Multitudes, especially of the youth, once scattered among the farms and smaller workshops of the country, are now congregated in compact masses, and are subject to all the influences, good and evil, which attend a dense and busy population.

Interesting as are the inquiries suggested by this state of things to the statesman and political econo-

mist, questions of vastly greater interest arise in the mind of every Christian. What complexion is the moral character of these institutions to assume? What is to be their effect on the intelligence and virtue of the community? These inquiries possess an interest paramount to any and all others, and demand the most serious consideration of every lover of his country's and of human weal.

One thing is certain. We are to be a manufacturing country. The tide of events which has already given so strong an impulse in this direction to American enterprise, cannot be arrested. It is every day becoming more resistless. The natural resources of the country, the amplitude of its domain, its fertility, and its means of artificial power by water and by steam—the capabilities for production in our large and increasing population, their enterprise, and the necessity of finding objects on which that enterprise may be expended—the aptitude of our countrymen for the mechanic arts, their ingenuity and skill, and their success in the invention of labor-saving machinery—all point out our destiny with a distinctness which supersedes the ken of prophecy. Even now, manufactures have ceased to be exotics here. They have struck their roots so deep, and have spread upward into such luxuriance, as to leave no doubt that they will henceforward compose an important feature of our moral and social scenery. Desirable or not, the result is inevitable. Christians and philanthropists

can only fall in with the current, and prepare themselves to meet, as best they may, the responsibilities and perils which it shall evolve.

Another fact is no less clear. The influence of manufactures on education and morals, is to be, one way or another, tremendous. They have already levied their contributions on nearly every town and village. They embosom the flower of many families of the yeomanry of the land—families from which have sprung the greater part of our most honored and useful men, and of which it is not exaggeration or flattery, but simple truth to assert, that they compose the bone and sinew of the nation's strength. Not a few of the youth who fill these abodes of honorable industry, are the offspring of piety and prayer. And around these crowded resorts, are clustered the supplications and hopes of many of the best hearts in our churches. They here form a society in which the elements of good and evil are brought into direct and fearful collision. Parental oversight is withdrawn. The kindly influence of the *family*, restraining from vice and stimulating to good behavior with all the secret magic of a charm, is here almost unknown. They are linked by active and numerous sympathies with every possible variety of character, and are exposed to every species of temptation. It is true their pursuits exercise and develope talent, and the constant contact of mind with mind, gives them a degree of intelligence perhaps above the average intellect of an

agricultural community. There is here little stagnation of thought ; and hence their ignorance, if they be ignorant, will not be that of torpid, vacant minds. It will be ingenious, passionate, prurient ; putting itself forth in forms of bold, reckless, destructive error. Uneducated mind in a manufacturing village will be emphatically "educated vice." The well known excitability too of such communities, may, under auspicious moral influences, be turned to the best account, as facts delightfully prove ; or it may render them "rebel to all law," and qualify them to bid defiance to every religious and moral restraint, as leviathan laughs at the shaking of a spear. And when these splendid monuments of enterprise and art shall have become lazar-houses of corruption, should heaven in its wrath ever visit us with so dire a day, the nation will rue the riches which erected them, and the very extremities of the social system will wither beneath their corrupted and corrupting influence.

Our hope however is strong that such a day is never to arrive. There is much to invigorate this hope in the habits and institutions of the American people. The industrious tenants of our mills and workshops are aspiring to become themselves at no distant day proprietors. They are treading the same honorable path through which some have already reached the high places of power, and multitudes have acquired competent, if not affluent wealth.

Few among them can be found at present, who are not looking forward to an eligible settlement in life, with little or no expectation that their present employments are to be the inheritance of their children. Among the unnumbered blessings of our social institutions, institutions whose glory it is that, like the laws of Providence, they are felt chiefly in the blessings which they diffuse, the constant though noiseless revolutions which society is undergoing are certainly among the foremost. With no law of entail, and no rights of primogeniture, there never can be an *aristocracy* among us, in any proper sense of the term. To how great an extent are our rich men the artificers of their own fortunes. How seldom is a family distinguished by inherited wealth through more than one or two generations. The elements of society, like the particles in a mass of boiling fluid, are constantly changing places. In the ceaseless rotation of the wheel, those who are now deemed by themselves and others as at the bottom, are found, in the lapse of a few years of patient industry and enterprise, at the top. We cling to the hope that, under the operation of our social system, manufacturers will never become a distinct *caste*, doomed, as *families*, to mere mechanical toil, and aspiring to no higher education for themselves or their children than is requisite to make them convenient appendages of the machinery with which they work.

Again, the early education of a large proportion of

those who work in our manufactories, will go far to form and maintain among them all an elevated tone of moral feeling. In countries where these institutions have been complained of as hotbeds of vice, it is questionable whether the fact, if it be a fact, is to be ascribed so much to the simple influence of the system, as to the previous moral character of the people themselves. As long as one half or one third of the youth in these establishments enter them with the associations of well regulated and pious homes fresh about them, they will compose a leaven of vast and truly conservative power.

And then there is among the people at large an ever wakeful jealousy of abuses, which, even while it seems to slumber, is still watching with its hundred eyes against the encroachments of avarice in the employer on the rights and welfare of the employed. Public sentiment must be strangely deteriorated to tolerate the abuses from which most of the evils charged to these institutions in other countries have sprung.

It is matter of encouragement, that hitherto so healthy a public sentiment has been maintained in most of our manufacturing communities. Proof is wanting that in point of morality and social order, they are inferior to any other communities of equal extent and density, or even to an equal number of youth taken as they rise in a sparse and widely scattered population.

It must not be forgotten, moreover, that the same causes which expose the youth in these crowded resorts to peculiar temptations, facilitate also salutary moral appliances. Religious sympathies are rapidly communicated. The sanctuary and the Sabbath school are commonly more accessible than they can be in most of our country towns; and systems of religious effort can be made to bear upon those who have not become inured to the thrilling scenes of the conference room and the meeting for social prayer.

But the chief ground of our hope respecting the future character of these institutions, is in the fact that some of the largest of them have been the scenes of delightful and glorious revivals of religion. The Holy Spirit has hovered over these interesting spots, and hallowed them by his special presence. To not a few they have proved the very gate of heaven. Hundreds of youth might be named, who, after a few months' residence here, have returned to their friends with a new song put into their mouths, and who will through eternity recur to this, as the birth-place of their souls.

These are, confessedly the brighter aspects of the subject. It must be admitted that the tendency of the unbounded prosperity of the country is to create the same inequalities of wealth, which characterize society in many states of the old world. With the progress of refinement, and the more extended application of the principle of division of labor,

the employments of the laboring classes will break them up more or less into distinct *castes*, at the sacrifice of intellectual expansion and capacity for moral improvement. With the growing luxury and vice of the country, our larger towns and villages will, it is to be feared, embody a still greater amount of corruption. Of these incalculable evils, manufacturing towns will come in for their full share. Nay, it is easy to see that, without special preventive influence, they, of all places, will be most sorely scathed by the lava tide of profligacy and crime.

These emergencies must be suitably met, or we are undone. In the responsibility of meeting them aright, the whole religious community partakes. A few suggestions to ministers and Christians will be here indulged.

There must be then, most obviously, a special adaptedness of ministerial and Christian effort to the wants and peculiarities of manufacturing towns. Not forgetting that the sovereign power of God is the only source of success in saving men, it is still a truth not to be overlooked, that God works ordinarily by instrumentalities adapted to their intended ends; and that, other things equal, those means will be most blessed, which are the most perfectly fitted to accomplish their object, and are most wisely, perseveringly, and prayerfully applied. It is on this ground that we speak of the wants of these places as demanding *special adaptedness* of religious exertions. No fixed

routine of effort, mechanically pursued ; no following of a beaten track ; no stereotyped plans of action, will answer the purpose. Among a population transient almost as the water-courses by which they dwell, a minister cannot live on the "capital" of reputation and public confidence which he may have acquired by past years of prudent, indefatigable, and successful toil. Nor will a few splendid efforts atone for long intervals of dullness. Pulpit preparation must not be neglected. Do whatever else a minister may, if he be habitually careless on this point, his moorings are unsound, and his sheet anchor drags. No audience hears preaching more attentively than one composed of mechanics. And with little aid, perhaps, from mere bookish lore, there is in such an audience no lack of quick perception, of sound common sense judgment, and a demand, approaching even to fastidiousness, for clear, matured and solid exhibitions of truth. But the pastor must not stop here. The materials, of which his church and congregation are composed, are, to a great extent, *individuals*, as distinguished from families. These require, as the means of attraction and union, a large amount of individual attention. The pastor's work, therefore, consists much in details ; and generally his success will depend less upon a few great or brilliant efforts, than upon a multitude of things, in themselves perhaps small, skilfully and seasonably performed. His

skill in tactics will go nearly or quite as far towards determining his success as his pulpit power.

His toils, like the fabled labors of Sisyphus, must be unintermitted. But if he have the blessing of God, the results will be proportionably great. Beneath his ministry are passing in quick succession scores and hundreds of minds to be molded for eternity by his hands. If he emulate the satisfaction of instrumentally "building up" a church, he may enjoy it in such a place, not merely for a few years, but for his life. Those who a year or two since were gathering around him, with the ardent attachment of his spiritual children, to cheer him with their sympathy and to lend him their aid, are now very probably gone. New faces present themselves every Sabbath. And these new comers must be converted, new conscripts for Christ must be perpetually enrolled, or the church, now numerous, and strong in mutual confidence and attachment, will be found to have ebbed from him in the reflux tide of emigration, leaving only the fragments of what was so lately "the pillar and ground of the truth."

This representation applies, in its whole extent, only to those places where the body of the population is composed of manufacturers. But it is true proportionably of smaller establishments. And it is made, not to discourage ministers from entering these fields of labor, but to correct an impression under which, we have sometimes suspected, ministers of acknow-

ledged power have declined invitations to the pastoral charge of such churches; viz: that they do not promise sufficient opportunities of usefulness. Let a minister throw himself upon such a community, regardless of emolument, honor, or ease, for the single purpose, in the strength of God, of winning men to Christ, and he shall have souls for his hire. True and warm hearts will rally for his countenance and support in every good enterprise. Aarons and Hurs will not be wanting. He shall not labor in vain, or spend his strength for naught.

In no communities so much as in these, does the prosperity of religion depend so much on the exertions of private members of the church in their individual and social capacities. They can perform services vital to the growth and prosperity of the church, which no pastor, without the gift of ubiquity, and scarcely even then, could render. The character and circumstances of the population, necessarily throw upon them much of the work of cementing and consolidating the church, and of securing the attendance of strangers upon the means of grace; introducing them, when suitable, to the pastor; and following up the favorable impressions which they may have received in the sanctuary. All the responsibility which rests upon Christians in other places, for the maintenance of a sound public sentiment, is incurred tenfold in a manufacturing village. No where are they called upon to take so high and decided a ground

on the subjects of Intemperance, Sabbath-breaking, and every other form of open vice. On all these subjects it emphatically concerns Christians thus circumstanced to avoid the appearance of evil; to abstain from what their circumstances and relations to others render inexpedient, as well as from what is morally and universally wrong. Let those habits of wasteful expenditure, of indulging in idle and fashionable amusements and follies, which have ensnared and ruined so many youths of both sexes, be met by professing Christians with the sternest and most decided reprobation. The peculiar susceptibility of all assemblages of youth, to the contagion of example, gives transcendent importance to the strictest consistency, in all these matters, on the part of professed followers of Christ. Let the youthful female friends of the Redeemer ponder well their peculiar responsibilities. Woman's energy and perseverance have here done wonders. It is ordinarily for the females of such a community to give tone to its public sentiment on morals and religion, and to decide how general shall be the attendance upon the sanctuary, the Sabbath school, and the meetings for prayer and for religious inquiry. It would be interesting, did space allow, to record some of the results of the divine blessing upon the exertions of females employed in manufactories. But their record is in heaven, and their memorial is on high. Let every female so situated, understand her obligations to Christ, and aspire to the enviable en-

comium pronounced by our Lord upon one of their sex—"She hath done what she could."

Professors of religion, on entering a manufactory, have too often imagined that they were lost among the throng of strangers, and were in some way released from the obligations which they recognized when among their friends, to walk not according to the course of this world. I shall not, I hope, be charged with censoriousness, if I say, that pastors abroad err most sadly in not encouraging the youth of their churches who are about to remove to these scenes of peculiar temptation, to become connected at once with some church of Christ in the place of their expected residence. What though their stay is to be but temporary, do not their best interests and highest usefulness plainly require that they should enjoy the Christian vigilance and sympathy of some church of Christ, and feel themselves responsible, to the extent of their influence, for its enlargement and purity? Facts speak on this subject with convincing and terrible eloquence. Delinquent professors of religion cripple the power of the gospel in these communities far more than all the combined opposition of avowedly irreligious men. Nowhere is it so true as here that if all the inconsistent professors of religion 'could be exchanged, each for ten open, boisterous enemies of the truth, piety might proclaim a jubilee at the brightening prospects of her cause.' In such places no safeguard of Christian character can be wisely dis-

pensed with. And it is surely no small security of Christian consistency, to feel one's self publicly and solemnly committed before the community among whom he resides, to live as becometh godliness. A simple introductory line, making them acquainted with some pastor of a church, would, under God, have saved numbers who have found, in manufacturing towns, the grave of their character, usefulness, and hopes.

To enlarge on the peculiar duties of professing Christians in manufacturing establishments, would be to anticipate other portions of this volume. One thought I cannot forbear to suggest. The friends of the Redeemer in such places, are most loudly called upon to quench the spirit of sectarian party strife. Party spirit in religion, always a calamity, is here a most blighting, withering curse. It works with a virulence elsewhere unknown, especially in villages of the smaller class, where rival denominations struggle for existence. While, therefore, every Christian indulges his predilection for his own place of worship, and feels himself specially responsible for the prosperity of that branch of the church of Christ with which he is directly connected, let him love the cause of Christ more than that of a sect, and strive to make inroads on the kingdom of darkness, rather than to win adherents to his own detachment of the sacramental host.

✓ The responsibility which devolves upon those, who,

as directors of companies, agents, and superintendents, control our manufacturing institutions, can scarcely be overrated. They cannot be insensible of the direct interest which they and their employers have in the religious and moral character of the institutions over which they preside. And many of them, it should be told, have exerted the influence, demanded by an enlightened policy, as really as by the higher law of duty to God. But there are those to whom the language of truth must be that of respectful though firm and urgent remonstrance. To any of this description into whose hands this volume may fall, I would say—Think not lightly of evangelical religion. Despise not the efforts of its friends. Give its institutions your active and efficient support. *Hallow the day of God, and let it not be violated under your authority, sanction, or connivance.* Let no demands of avarice wrest this consecrated day from the holy ends to which the temporal welfare of society, no less than the laws of God, require it to be devoted. The time may come when you will feel the need of the enlightening, soothing, and subduing influences of the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the Sabbath school, to stand between you and the radicalism, which, in its jealousy of wealth and distinction, shall prostrate law and social order, and wreak its blind malice on the splendid achievements of your capital and skill. The signs of the times are surely portentous enough to bid you beware of doing any

thing, in person or by proxy, to arrest or obstruct any of the instrumentalities which God has appointed for bringing his moral government to bear upon the consciences and hearts of men. You may despise the Sabbath and the public worship of God. But a just God will hold you to account for all the good which an opposite course would have secured, and for the positive mischiefs which your station and influence give you the opportunity thus to inflict upon society around you ; and none will be to blame more than yourselves, should it appear at no distant day, that in prostrating the Sabbath, you have sprung a mine, of which yourselves and those whom you represent are the very first victims.

It cannot be too often repeated or too deeply impressed, that the special presence of the Holy Spirit in his renovating power is the only ultimate ground of hope for the continued purity of these institutions. They must be the scenes of perpetual revivals of religion, or abodes of moral infection and spiritual death. Let then those pastors and Christians who are called to live and labor in these important fields of benevolent exertion, make it the burden of their efforts and prayers to secure the shedding down of celestial influence like the rain and the dew. If the obstacles are peculiar, so also are the encouragements. The useful arts are with us as yet in their infancy. Their relation to morality and religion is now fast assuming a shape and complexion which will be re-

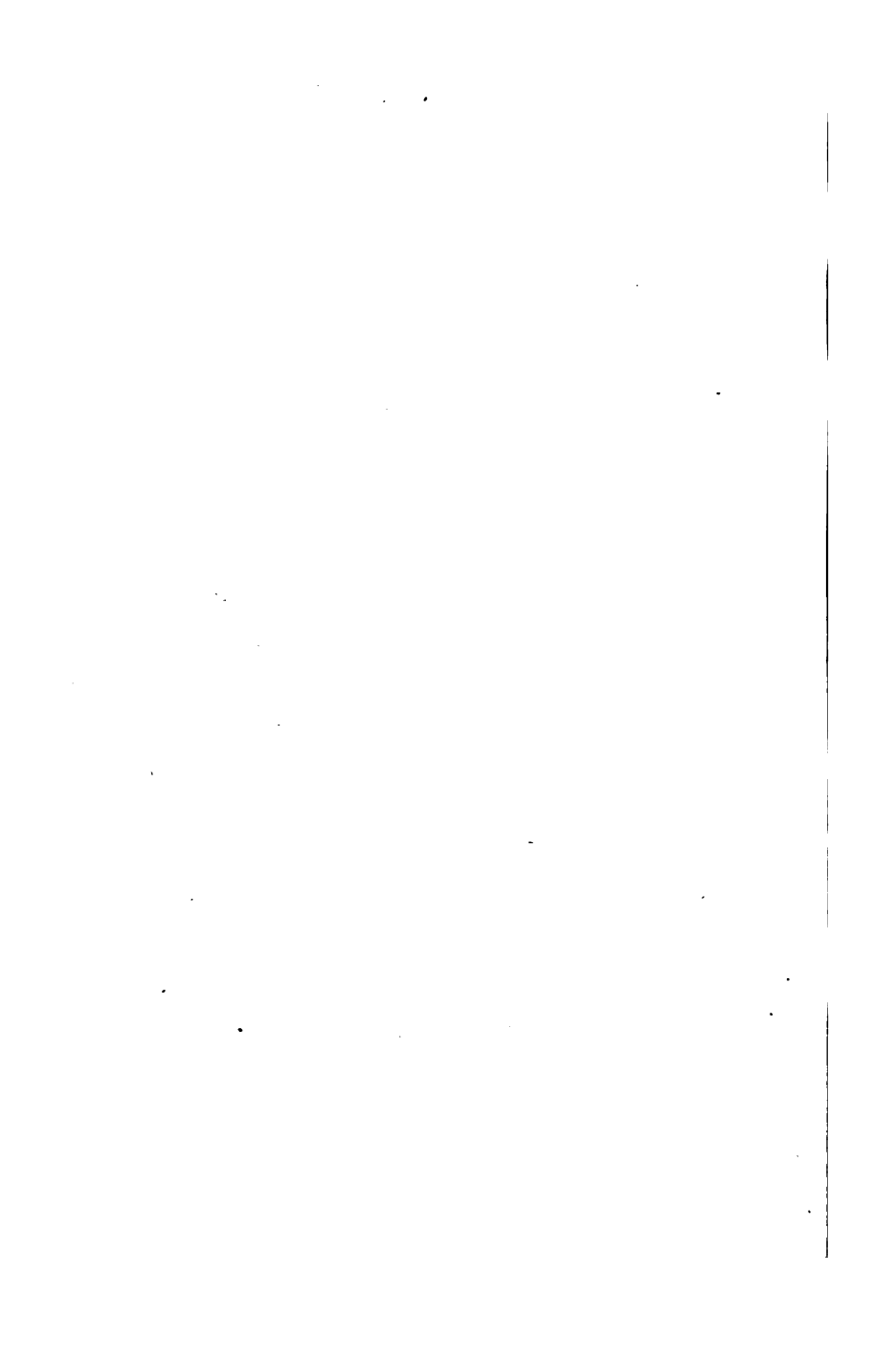
tained when maturer growth shall have developed their giant energies. No one can be in a position to observe the rills of influence by which the character of these institutions reaches and affects the whole community, without feeling that we are authorized to bespeak in their behalf the prayers and sympathies of all Christians. Let our Home Missionary Societies bestow special attention upon the manufacturing villages whose population and resources are inadequate, without foreign aid, to the support of an evangelical ministry. Nor let our older towns withhold their aid when needed for the erection of houses of public worship. *It should be understood that the wealth of such places is for the most part owned and represented, as to religious objects, elsewhere; that the mass of those on whom devolves the support of religion, are young men and women, with no capital but their enterprise, their industry, and their time; and that, relatively to their population, such places have generally less ability than any others for enterprises requiring so heavy an outlay of capital, as the building of suitable houses of public worship.* We could tell of sacrifices made for such objects by those whose earthly all is their daily wages, such as the owners of hoarded wealth in our older towns would turn pale to think of. *Furnish them with meeting-houses,* and such places will be found foremost in devising and executing liberal things. Their characteristic enterprise in business will show itself in religion. *Put them, in this respect, on a*

level with towns whose capital can yield its thousands for this purpose without a sensation of embarrassment, where local attachments and the prospect of permanent abode divest such enterprises of even the show of self-denial, and where they are attended with not more than one half or one third of their expense in manufacturing towns; and no places will outdo these in attendance on public worship, or in readiness to meet the current expenses of maintaining religious institutions.

It bodes well for the religious interests of manufacturing districts, that the press is becoming tributary to their spiritual wants. *Adaptation* marks the age. The multiplication of books is sometimes complained of as an evil. But in so far as it results from well directed efforts to adapt religious instruction to every condition of mind, there is surely little cause to deplore it. While, therefore, we have many excellent volumes intended for the young, let not this attempt to address a particular class of the young be deemed a work of supererogation. Every pastor located in or near a manufacturing village, must have felt the need of some volume to be put into the hands of this interesting and important portion of his congregation, which should speak to their condition. And many a parent has desired to deposit such a volume with his son or daughter on leaving the family home, as a memento of danger and of

duty. The author having favored me with the perusal of his manuscript, I am happy to bear my testimony to the wisdom of his plan, and the success of its execution. The doctrinal views are, throughout, those in which I suppose all classes of evangelical Christians will concur. But the work will speak for itself. I recommend it most cordially to the beloved youth of my own pastoral charge, and to all who like them are summoned to the duties, and exposed to the dangers of such a community. May the author reap an ample reward for this labor of love in the enlarged effusions of the Holy Spirit upon his own flock, and in the blessing of Heaven on this little volume whithersoever it shall go on its errand of mercy and of life.

Lowell, March, 1836.



LECTURES
TO
YOUNG PEOPLE.

LECTURE I.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PERIOD OF YOUTH.

PROV. xx. 29.—The glory of young men is their strength.

IN attempting to adapt a series of discourses to the circumstances of young people in a manufacturing village, I am entering, so far as I know, upon untrodden ground. Able lectures, addressed to youth in other situations in life, are at command, but they do not profess to reach the peculiar conditions of a manufacturing population. To say that the circumstances of such a population are, in some important respects, peculiar, is to utter the language, not of invidiousness, but of kind truth ; and the public good requires that these conditions should be more accurately known and appreciated.

A manufacturing population, then, is yet a *novelty* in this country. Manufactures, of the simpler kinds, were indeed coeval with the settlement of New England; but it was not till the general pacification of Europe in 1815, that they assumed any great degree of importance. Since that period, they have outstripped, in the Northern and Middle States, all the other great departments of secular enterprise. That they are destined in future years to increase, to a great and indefinite extent, requires no prophetic skill to divine. If we consider the amplitude of our domain—its natural resources—its mineral treasures—its exuberant fertility—its means of artificial power by water and by steam—the rapid increase of our population—the far famed aptitude of our countrymen for the mechanic arts—their ingenuity in the invention of labor-saving machinery—and the great surplus capital of many of our citizens, which can find no other so profitable investment, there can no longer remain a doubt, that manufactures will, in coming years, be prosecuted on a far more extensive scale than the present. If, then, such be the recent date, present importance, and prospective magnitude of the manufacturing interest, it ought surely to receive the serious consideration, not merely of the political economist, and the

statesman who adjusts the tariffs of his country, but of all who regard the moral bearing of different pursuits upon the condition of individuals and of communities.

A very large proportion of youth is another peculiarity in a manufacturing population. This feature is at once remarked by every stranger, on entering a village or a congregation composed of this class of our citizens. Few indeed are the hoary heads in such a community. Here are the young, the ingenious, the enterprising. Special efforts for their instruction and establishment in the great principles of morals and religion, can never be deemed inappropriate or unnecessary.

No small part of such a population are also *widely separated from their parents and friends*. They have left the nameless endearments of home, and the restraints of parental authority, to engage in the business of active life, and that, too, at an age, when the counsel of parents and of other judicious friends is of incalculable value. Not a few also are in a *state of unprotected orphanage*. With no father's house to which they can resort in seasons of bodily indisposition and mental distress, and no mother's attentions and prayers to assuage the grief of the heart, does not their lonely and defenceless situation bespeak the sym-

pathies of humanity and of Christian benevolence ?

Such a population also comprises no small share of *vigorous and independent mind*. There are no sinecures for mental dullness in a manufacturing community. Here, no person can get a dollar a day for sleeping. No person can be a distinguished machinist or manufacturer, with but a mediocrity of mental strength and ingenuity. It is only that class of minds which is enterprising, noble and magnanimous, that finds its element in the ceaseless industry and manly independence of a manufacturing population.

Such a community possesses *immense facilities for exerting an influence on the country*. The population is *dense*. It has all the advantages incident to frequent intercommunication. Opinions, whether good or bad, circulate rapidly. A little leaven quickly leavens the whole lump. The people are collected from different parts of the country, and perhaps of the world, and sentiments, formed by such communities, are disseminated among their friends, and thus society, throughout its numerous ramifications, feels the influence of the manufacturing villages. Even London herself, it is said, looks up to Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and other large manufacturing towns in

England, for opinions upon the great political questions, which, from time to time, agitate the public mind. The manufacturing interest in this country does by no means exert that controlling influence over public affairs, which it does in Great Britain, for here it is yet in its infancy; but it already gives tokens that it is the infancy of a giant.

Another peculiarity in the manufacturing villages of our country is, that their *place on the scale of moral character does not yet seem to be determined*. Whether they will sink to the low point of the manufacturing districts of the old world; or whether they will average in moral character with our agricultural, mercantile and commercial population; or whether they will surpass them all, in purity of morals, is yet a problem. It is not to be denied, that the solution of this problem is of vital importance to the country; nor is it to be concealed, that much solicitude is extensively felt for the result.

Such are the more prominent conditions of a manufacturing population in this country. In this Course of Lectures, such subjects will be presented as are deemed to be appropriate to these conditions; and, as I trust it is commenced with a desire to promote your present and eternal good,

may I not be permitted to draw somewhat largely upon your candor, and to cherish the hope that whatever of truth may be exhibited, will be cordially embraced and practised ?

Solomon tells us that "the glory of young men is their strength." He probably had primary reference to the physical strength for which young men are distinguished. But, by a very easy and natural accommodation, the text may be regarded as having respect to the *moral strength or influence* of the young of both sexes. I propose to contemplate it in this broad moral aspect. The subject of this introductory lecture will therefore be,

THE GREAT IMPORTANCE OF THE SEASON OF YOUTH ;

I. To *yourselves*.

II. To *the world*.

To *yourselves*, it is important,

1. As it is a season of *exquisite susceptibility*.

From the earliest dawn of moral agency in the infantile mind, all men have a sinful moral character ; but their depravity, although entire, is not of so deadly a virus, and does not exhibit such deeply indurated features, as in mature age. During the period of childhood and early youth, there is a peculiar susceptibility of moral and re-

ligious impression, which we search for in vain in the subsequent stages of life. The passions now are easily moved—the conscience is tender—the mind is open to the various influences which may assail it. The whole mental and moral constitution is spread out to receive impressions, either good or evil, from whatever comes in contact with it, like the petals of a flower, displayed alike to the sunshine, the dew, and the storm.

If you have any regard, as I know you have, to your future peace and respectability, you cannot be indifferent to those numerous influences which operate, with such prodigious power, upon the character of youth. A point of no inferior consequence will be gained, if your minds should be habitually awake to the high importance of your season of life, arising from its peculiar susceptibility of impression.

It is important to you,

2. Inasmuch as it is the season of *education*. I know, indeed, that many of you have completed your education, so far as the schools are concerned. But the great business of education, properly so called, is by no means confined to the school-room. It is going forward every day—the education of circumstances—insensible education—by means of which, your opinions, prejudices, habits and char-

acters for life are forming. Enlightened heathens, as well as Christians, have noticed that the impressions imbibed by youth, "grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength." Hamilcar, the Carthaginian general, understood this principle and acted on it, when he brought his son, at the early age of nine years, to the altar, and there made him swear eternal vengeance against the Romans. It was because prejudice was thus early instilled into the youthful mind of Hannibal, that he became the most inveterate, the most uncompromising, the most terrible foe of Rome. The arch infidel Voltaire understood this principle when he said, "give me the making of the ballads, which are read and sung by the youth, and I care not who has the making of the laws."

The present, then, my young friends, is the season of your education—of your education in its most comprehensive and important sense. Those influences which are now forming your manners and your minds, cannot, if you are at all awake to the subject, fail deeply to interest you. They are insinuating themselves into your very habitudes of thought and feeling. They are interweaving themselves in the very texture of your mental constitution.

The present is with you an important period of life,

3. On account of its peculiar *exposure to temptation*. The dangers, to which young people in manufacturing and all other densely populated villages are more particularly exposed, are those arising from intemperance, profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, licentiousness, and erroneous religious sentiments. In this connection, it gives me sincere pleasure to be able to state, that it is believed this village will bear comparison, for purity of morals, with any other similarly situated community in New England. And it is devoutly hoped, that in future years it will even more than maintain its present elevated position in this respect. But a faithful exhibition of the high importance to yourselves of your present period of life, requires a distinct reference to those vices and errors to which young people are always more or less exposed. No person is too strongly fortified against temptation. The celebrated Fisher Ames was accustomed to say, "we have but a slender hold of our virtues; they ought therefore to be cherished with care, and practised with diligence. He who holds parley with vice and dishonor, is sure to become their slave and victim. The heart is more than half corrupted, that does not burn with indignation at the slightest attempt to seduce it." Happy, indeed, will it be for every youth here, if it can

be said of you, as it was beautifully remarked of that pure-minded patriot, "he did not need the smart of guilt to make him virtuous, nor the regret of folly to make him wise." I appeal then to your self-respect, and to your regard for the public weal, and exhort you to untiring efforts to uproot the last vestiges of immorality which may exist among us. If the *youth* will but resolve upon their extermination, the work is done.

Your season of life is of indescribable importance to you,

4. Because your *religious principles are now forming*. You have already been sufficiently conversant with the world to know, that religious opinions are almost endlessly diversified, and frequently contradictory. Almost every sect, too, except atheists and deists, profess to derive their sentiments from the Bible. Now it is perfectly obvious that all these sentiments cannot be right, and also that most of them must be wrong. And when we recollect the intimate and inevitable connection between faith and practice, it cannot be a matter of indifference to you what religious opinions you embrace. As your present peace and future felicity are concerned, this subject is fundamental—it is vital. I purposely abstain from entering upon its merits at this time, because it is

intended to exhibit it more at large in a future lecture. But the criticalness of that period of life, when the religious sentiments are imbibed, and matured, and wrought into the very structure of your moral being, is beyond the power of language to describe, or the imagination of an angel to conceive. ♦

5. But the last and crowning circumstance which gives importance to your present time of life, is, that it is the season when *nearly all become Christians* who ever do. The statistics of revivals of religion exhibit facts in relation to this subject, of overwhelming interest to persons of all ages. Probably nine tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths of the present members of the churches became hopefully pious, while under the age of forty. The term *youth*, in its most enlarged sense, may be said to embrace all persons up to that age. But, according to the Scriptures, there is something fearful in the thought of passing that limit without repentance. What else can be meant by such passages as these?—"Your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works *forty* years." "But with whom was he grieved *forty* years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" "*Forty* years long was I grieved with this generation, and said,

It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways; unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest." Around what other epoch, in the progress of human life, can you find so many terrors clustering? Although there are occasional instances of conversion in later periods of life, there is something tremendously appalling in the idea of passing that extreme limit in the period of youth, in a state of enmity against God.

But that is not all. It is well known, that a vast majority of those who embrace religion, do it at a much earlier age than this. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings," God often perfects praise. Some of you, it is hoped, have "remembered your Creator in the days of your" early "youth." To all who have not, let me say—"Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation." Your present time of life is, of all others, the most favorable for attending to the great concern. Let these tender, susceptible years pass by unimproved, and the loss is remediless—they are gone forever. Beyond all question, so far as your immortal interests are concerned, the present is by far the most important part of your life. Whatever you do—whether you accept or reject the "great salvation," you will feel the

consequences of your choice, in the extremes of rapture or of wo, all along the mighty cycle of eternity.

But it is time to pass to the remaining branch of the subject, and to show,

II. That the season of your youth is of great importance to *the world*.

1. Young people exert great influence *over each other*. This inevitably follows from the laws of social intercourse. Mankind are so constituted, that they cannot associate freely together without receiving and communicating impressions. This law of our social being is specially illustrated in all densely peopled communities, because the points of contact are unusually numerous. And it is still more emphatically illustrated in the *unreserved freedom of intercourse*, which obtains among persons engaged in the same occupation. Continually and insensibly are they exerting an influence over each other, of the most important character. Nor is this incompatible with independence of mind. Real independence does not disdain the opinions of others, nor retire, in haughty disgust, from society. But it rather invites their opinions, gives them a candid hearing, and allows them all the weight to which they are fairly entitled. This condescending and generous treatment

of the sentiments of others, is a necessary ingredient in genuine dignity of mind.

Your time of life is, therefore, of great moment to society, inasmuch as you are giving to each other a cast of character which no lapse of ages can destroy.

Your passing period of life is of immense importance to the world,

- ✓ 2. Because the *first generation of manufacturers* in this country, will *materially affect all subsequent ones*. Perhaps it may be said that such a generation does not yet exist—that those who are now engaged in manufacturing pursuits regard them as mere temporary occupations, from which they intend soon to retire to other employments. Such is unquestionably the intention of a very large majority of those who are at present thus occupied. But when children, in no inconsiderable numbers, are put into manufactories at the early age of eleven years, and even earlier, and kept there from year to year with but perhaps an annual respite of three or four months for purposes of education, there can be no doubt in the mind of any observant man, that the system on which manufactures are conducted is rapidly creating, and has, in fact, already created a class, which may be properly called manufacturers. The moral influence of

manufactures is now undergoing the test of experiment. The ultimate result is not developed. Not our own country only, but the great commonwealth of nations is deeply interested in the issue. Much, very much of the moral influence of this growing interest, will depend on the character of those who are connected with it during its incipient stages. You, and other youth similarly situated, will do much towards deciding the question, whether the manufacturing establishments of our country are to be, as some of their enemies predict, the veriest hotbeds of ignorance, and degradation, and radicalism, and crime; or, whether they are to equal, or even to surpass other occupations in intelligence, and virtue, and magnanimous devotion to the best interests of man. Point me, then, if you can, to the class of young men and young females in our land, which are acting under responsibilities so momentous. If the young people, who compose so large a portion of our manufacturing communities, will but awake to the influence they must exert on their successors for generations to come, there will be but little cause for solicitude as to the result of the experiment now in progress. Their well known spirit of enterprise—their thirst for improvement—their self-respect—their liberality, accompanied with the requisite sense of re-

sponsibility in the case, will be a sufficient guaranty, under God, that the manufacturing interest will exert a salutary moral influence on the world.

Your season of life is of pre-eminent importance to others,

3. Because the world is more *easily and extensively affected by moral influence* than at any preceding period. The present has been appropriately styled "the transition age." The world is now passing from a condition of great moral deformity and debasement, to one of millennial beauty and elevation. The foundations of many generations are breaking up. The general mind of man is waking from the slumber of ages. The moral elements are in high commotion. Opinion is dashing against opinion, like the waves of ocean against the shore. Moral causes exert a hundred fold more power than they did in the twelfth century. The influence of the press is tremendous. The ends of the earth are brought into juxtaposition by means of steam. Whatever of importance is done in any place, affects, with electrical quickness, the antipodes. Never before was the world in such an excitable, impressible state. Never before did a generation of youth appear on the stage of action, with so many facilities for doing good or evil. Never before was the

moral "strength" of the "young" so herculean ; and never before, if they will exert that strength aright, could it win such victories of benevolence, or place on their heads crowns of such surpassing brilliancy.

Finally, The season of your youth is important to the world, because the *church of God has claims* upon your influence. I am not addressing a congregation of young people, who are ignorant of the moral "signs of the times." You are well aware, that high expectations are entertained, and on the best of grounds, that the religion of the gospel is soon to become the religion of the world. But great must be the expenditure of time and strength, and property and life, before that glorious consummation can be realized. To whom, then, so far as instrumental agency is concerned, is the church to look for help, if not to the youth—to those whose "strength" is their "glory?"

YOUNG MEN, the church calls on you for aid. She hath need of you. She needs your hearts, your time, your substance, your influence, your prayers, your labors. Devote yourselves, then, like youthful Samuel and Timothy, to the Lord. "The field," to which he summons you, "is the world." Here is scope enough for your philanthropy and enterprise. Live and die in promoting

that cause which will soon absorb every other—the cause of Jesus Christ.

YOUNG FEMALES, the church of God calls on you. Give it your lives, and your all. Sympathize, like the “daughters of Jerusalem,” with the Redeemer, in his efforts to save a dying world. Imitate the unwavering devotedness to Him, which was so characteristic of *woman*, during the trying scenes of the crucifixion :—

“Not *she* with trait’rous kiss the Saviour stung;
Not *she* denied him with unholy tongue :
But when Apostles shrunk, did dangers brave,
Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave.”

LECTURE II.

INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION.

Ps. CXLIV. 12.—That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;
that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of
a palace.

GRAY, in his "Distant Prospect of Eton College," has drawn an exquisite picture of the simplicity, gayety and unconcern of early youth.

"Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possess'd;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day."

Such is the description, which the poet gives of a class of youth, who were sent to the groves of Academus to make those intellectual acquisitions,

which should fit them to fill with honor the learned professions of Great Britain. Many youth, with all the advantages for education offered by an university, have thoughtlessly squandered their privileges, and have never woke up to the "realities" of life, till it was too late. But there is occasionally a person, like Paley, who, after being prodigal of his scholastic advantages, "comes to himself," redeems his time, and wins unfading laurels on the fields of literature.

Most of you have already passed the blithesome period of very early youth, and are beginning to look at life in a graver aspect. Whatever may have been the degree of success, with which you prosecuted study while at the schools, you have now reached that time of life, when you probably realize, more deeply than ever, the importance of a good education.

I shall avail myself of the spirit of the text, to commend to your increasing regard the subject of

INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION.

My remarks will be confined to the three following topics ;—

I. *Its importance.*

II. The *obstacles* to mental improvement in such a community as this ; and

III. The *means of overcoming* them.

Its *importance* is apparent,

1. As it is a prominent means of *personal enjoyment and influence*. It is altogether a mistake to suppose, that, when we have entered upon active life, further mental culture is unnecessary, or incompatible with the successful prosecution of business. The standard of education is now elevated, and is continually rising. The amount of intellectual wealth, which, twenty-five years ago, conferred great enjoyment and influence, is now quite inadequate to produce the same result. During that period, the mind of civilized man has received an impulse, greater perhaps than any preceding *century* had communicated. Now, a taste for reading very generally prevails. The mind, which does not keep up, in this particular, with the times, feels a degrading sense of inferiority. The respect of others being lost, it soon loses respect for itself. Its enjoyment and influence are now seriously impaired, if not utterly destroyed. This calamitous result cannot be avoided, in this improving age, except by persevering efforts at mental cultivation. The professional man, who should abandon study, will soon find his mind debilitated—his memory weakened—his power of close and long-continued thought

destroyed—and those who were his equals in standing, already become his superiors. Such is the thirst for knowledge—such the “rush of mind,” that the man who stands still but a short time, will find himself outstripped by others ; his compeers become his masters. This will hold as true of persons engaged in manual-labor occupations, as of professional men. The importance of constant attention to the culture of your minds, is therefore urged upon you by every motive of personal enjoyment and usefulness. Never feel that you are too old to learn. Waller, by incessant cultivation of his taste and imagination, lost none of his poetical power at eighty-two ; and the great Newton, in his eighty-fifth year, and only a few days before his death, was found improving his “Chronology.”

2. As a matter of *pecuniary benefit to yourselves and your employers*. My object here is not to urge the sordid motive of money-making as a reason for intellectual improvement, but to illustrate *the fact*, that superior intelligence always contributes to increase prosperity in business. Time has been, when the converse of this maxim was held to be sound ;—that the more ignorant a person was, the better at least for his employer. Such a principle befitted the feudal institutions of

Europe, and was twin-sister of the papal maxim, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion." But the progress of light has exploded them both. In all well-informed communities, it is now universally admitted, that the labor of intelligent, free, independent operatives, is far more productive than that of ignorant serfs or slaves. This doctrine is advocated by the most distinguished political economists, such as Adam Smith, Say, and Malthus. What enlightened individual or company but would prefer to employ, so far as the mere matter of dollars and cents is concerned, the services of persons of intelligence and self-respect, and consequently, of skill and enterprise? By so doing, they find their account in the superior quality of the work performed—in the diminished expense of keeping their tools and machinery in repair—in the smaller premium paid for insurance and supervision—and in partial relief from taxes for the support of pauperism and the prevention of crime. Vice is often compelled to pay homage to virtue; but it is a homage by no means more profound, than that which ignorance renders to intelligence. An intelligent agriculturalist—one who understands the nature of different soils, the best methods of cultivation, and the proper rotation of crops, will be far more successful in business, than

one who is ignorant of the scientific principles of husbandry. The merchant of intelligence and forecast more readily perceives those occasional tides in human affairs, which bear men on to fortune, than he who knows but little of the state of the market, and the condition of the world. In like manner, those operatives in a manufacturing establishment who are the most intelligent and enlightened, will, other things being equal, be the most skillful in the prosecution of their work—will command the highest wages, and be the most profitable to their employers. The principles of sound political economy, therefore, offer the highest premium for this description of labor, and present a cogent motive to mental improvement.

It is important,

3. As it *elevates the character* of manufacturing pursuits. There is a strong disposition in the public mind, to compare the moral character of our manufacturing establishments with that of those in Great Britain. Without at all appreciating the difference in the educational and moral condition of the two countries, in the habits and institutions of society, and in the standing and prospects for life of the operatives, many have imbibed the uncharitable and groundless impression, that the manufacturing establishments of our

country are to inherit the moral character of their predecessors in the old world. That the moral condition of most of the transatlantic manufacturing establishments is deplorable indeed, admits of no question. In a speech of Lord Chancellor Brougham, in 1833, he says, "*ignorance prevails in Great Britain to a horrible extent.*" The British and Foreign School Society, not long since made this memorable declaration, "ENGLAND IS YET UNEDUCATED." Dr. Chalmers, in a speech made on a public occasion in 1834, repeatedly deplored the "*practical heathenism,*" in which thousands of the population of Edinburgh live. He had recourse even to the strong figure, that it is necessary "*to excavate the population, firmly imbedded in a mass of practical heathenism.*" And when we recollect, that more than seven eighths of the population of Great Britain obtain their living by labor, and that manufactures of many descriptions, are prosecuted to an extent which has no parallel in any other country, we can have no doubt, that the above cited declarations of the ignorance which prevails there, have emphatic reference to the operatives in the manufactories. Simpson, in his "Popular Education," also asks, "Who has not felt and deplored, in his intercourse with nearly the whole class of manual-

laborers, even what are deemed the most decent and respectable, the mass of prejudice, superstition and general ignorance, which he is doomed to encounter? The working man," he says, "rarely knows how to better his lot in life, by rational reflection on causes and consequences, founded on early acquaintance with the simpler principles of trade, the state of particular employments, the legitimate relation between labor and capital, and between laborer and employer, the best employment of surplus earnings, the value of character, the marketable importance, to say no more, of sober and moral habits and intelligence; in short, on any practical views of the circumstances, which influence his condition. On the contrary, he is the creature of impressions and impulses, the unresisting slave of sensual appetites, the ready dupe of the quack, the thrall of the fanatic, and, above all, the passive instrument of the political agitator."

Such, according to English testimony, is the mental and moral condition of the great mass of the laborers in the British manufactories. They are so profoundly uninformed as to their own position in the market of labor, and the due relation of labor and capital, that they are readily seduced to join combinations to *extort* larger wages and fewer

hours, both of which, if they could be obtained, would, in their present condition, only be misapplied to purposes of idleness and sensuality, and of course, be a curse instead of a blessing. By joining such short-sighted unions, they often throw themselves permanently out of the only employment with which they are acquainted, and plunge themselves and their families into all the horrors of starvation.

That the manufacturers of our country will ever sink to such deep degradation, is, by no means, to be expected. But if, on the contrary, they would reach that *high elevation of character*, which is so desirable to every community, and which, considering the nature of our institutions, it is so easy for them to attain, the foundations of such intellectual and moral eminence must be laid in the thorough education of the children and youth.

II. But, in such communities as this, there are certain *obstacles* to great intellectual culture, which deserve our consideration.

1. The first of these is, *want of time*. From twelve to thirteen hours a day,* you are engaged ✓

* A large proportion of the youth, to whom these Lectures were addressed, are engaged in the cotton manufacture. This fact will explain a few other expressions and allusions in these pages.

in your manual-labor employments. If you add to the hours thus occupied, those which are demanded by other necessary avocations and by sleep, the time which you can devote to the direct improvement of your minds is very little. This, it must be acknowledged, is a serious obstacle to great literary acquirements. But, while your time for intellectual improvement is limited, you have this advantage, that you know just *what time* you can devote to it. The perfect system, with which your manual-labor employments are conducted, enables you to calculate, with great accuracy, the time which you can devote to study. This redeeming circumstance is one of no inconsiderable importance, and gives you a decided advantage for mental improvement over those classes of society, whose ordinary business is less systematic.

2. Another obstacle is *lassitude of body and mind*. A general languor of the physical and mental powers is created by long-continued application to business. After spending twelve or thirteen hours in labor, a person is quite unfitted for close mental application. In order to prosecute study the most successfully, the body and mind must be in an active, vigorous state. Besides, that *discipline of mind*, which will enable one to accomplish much, even in untoward situations, is

very difficult *to be acquired* under the almost ceaseless pressure of business. These conditions present serious impediments to your progress in study. But do not feel that their influence cannot be counteracted. Simpson, the mathematician, by untiring perseverance in mental application, rose from the weaver's loom to the first rank of scientific men.

3. There is *no great demand for high literary attainments*. In academical and professional life, there is incessant conflict of mind with mind. *There*, the premium, which public sentiment awards, is awarded only to mental productions of a high order. In such a market, distinguished efforts of mind are the articles in demand. But, in all pursuits where there is no *special* demand for great intellectual acquirements, there will, of course, be less prospect that they will be made. The river will rise no higher than the fountain. The supply will not be likely to exceed the demand. No employments of the handicraft character present the highest inducements to intellectual improvement. Those persons who have no special taste for improvement, will therefore be in danger of resting satisfied with barely that measure of education, which may enable them to ply their mechanical operations

with acceptance. Such are the prominent obstacles to intellectual improvement, which exist among a manufacturing population.

III. It now remains to consider the *means of overcoming* them.

1. Attach a *high degree of importance* to education. A man's principles will affect his practice. If education be undervalued, it will be likely to be neglected; if its vast importance be appreciated, it will receive corresponding attention. To argue the importance of education, in this enlightened day, would seem to be as superfluous a task, as an attempt to demonstrate an axiom. And yet it is the theme of almost every tongue. It is advocated in every variety of form and manner. It is urged in the tract, the newspaper, the periodical, and the more stately volume. It is the theme of the teacher, the professional man, the poet, the patriot, the philanthropist, the statesman. For a few years past, perhaps no subject has found so many eloquent panegyrists. And, yet, one half of its importance to individuals or to communities has not been told. "An angel's lyre" would not suffice to sound its praises, nor a seraph's eloquence to do justice to its merits. Let its immeasurable importance to man, in his individual and social capacities, be impressed upon

your hearts. Next to the conservative power of the gospel, we must look to *education* to give perpetuity to our republican institutions, and to preserve our cities and villages from riots, incendiarism and blood. A well-educated individual is a blessing to himself and to the world. A well-educated community will be a prosperous community, and its example will operate salutary changes on the other side of the globe.

2. *Rise early.* Perhaps you may think this advice gratuitous, when your business often calls you to rise before the sun. But there is little danger of rising too early. The mind is more vigorous, early in the morning, than in any other part of the day. Milton wrote much of the "Paradise Lost" before breakfast. Though to him did not return

"Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n, or morn,
So thick a drop serene had quenched his orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd,"

yet some of the most splendid passages of that immortal poem were written under the inspiration of early dawn. Dean Swift says, "I never knew any man come to greatness and eminence who lay in bed of a morning." The celebrated Buffon agreed to give his servant a crown every day, if he would get him out of bed by six in the morning.

His servant persevered, and his master afterwards said, "I am indebted to poor Joseph" (his servant) "for ten or a dozen volumes of my works."

Frederick II. of Prussia, gave strict orders never to be allowed to sleep later than four in the morning. Peter the Great always rose before daylight. Dr. Doddridge declares, that his Commentary on the New Testament, and most of his other writings, were the result of his habit of rising at five o'clock. "One of the most celebrated writers in England was lately asked, how it was that he wrote so much, and yet from ten in the forenoon was at leisure through the day ;—'Because I begin to write at *three* in the morning,' was the reply."* One half hour devoted to reading, before you enter upon business, will furnish you with materials for profitable reflection through the day. Such a practice, perseveringly pursued, will yield you a stock of knowledge, which some graduates of our colleges can hardly be said to possess.

3. Improve *fragments of time*. "Drops added to drops," says the Arabian proverb, "constitute the ocean." The pyramids of Egypt were reared by degrees. The coral-insect, by beginning at the bottom of the ocean and adding one grain at a time,

* Todd's Student's Manual.

has built those beautiful, numerous and extensive islands, which adorn the Pacific. It has been said, that "he that shall walk with vigor only three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space, equal to the circumference of the globe." Luther was asked, "How, amid all his travels and active labors, he could have made so perfect a translation of the whole Bible." "No day without a verse," was his reply. This slow process, in due time, carried him through.

Of nothing are men more prodigal than of those little portions of time, which intervene between their regular hours of business, and yet it is perfectly astonishing how much may be accomplished, by devoting such fragments to some valuable purpose. "It is a virtue," says Seneca, "to be covetous of time." God has given us all time enough, if properly improved, to make us intelligent, wise, and happy. Appreciate far more highly those little intervals, which your business leaves you every day. Appropriate them to the improvement of your minds.

"On all important time, through every age,
Though much and warm the wise have urged, the man
Is yet unborn, who *duly weighs an hour*."

"Moments seize." Your happiness, your usefulness are on their wing.

4. *Let your reading be select.* We live in an age when the remark of Solomon seems to be verified, "of making many books there is no end." No scholar even can or ought to read the whole. Much less can persons, whose business is manual-labor. Considering the small portions of time which you can devote to this employment, there is special reason why your reading should be select. It is far better to read but few books of the right kind, and read them well, than to range superficially over the whole field of literature. Apply to some judicious friend to direct you to a proper course of reading. Especially, avoid bad books. Voltaire was made an infidel for life, by committing to memory, at the early age of three years, a deistical pamphlet. The influence of books, in forming the taste and in giving direction to life, is incalculable. The reading of Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, in his mother's apartment, made Cowley, as he says, "irrecoverably a poet." Sir Joshua Reynolds's taste for painting was first excited, by reading Richardson's *Treatise* on that subject. The reading of but *one* book, and that often a tract, frequently gives a cast to a person's character, and a bent to his destiny which last forever. Let your books, then, be well chosen and thoroughly read, and their influence will be

seen in the enlargement of your understandings, in the refinement of your taste, and in the augmentation of your usefulness.

5. Habitually attend upon *the public instructions of the gospel*. No one knows how much we are indebted to the gospel, for its improvement of the intellectual powers of man. Its simple, solemn and sublime announcements are admirably adapted to chasten and give wing to the imagination, to mature the judgment, to strengthen the memory, and to invigorate the conscience. The infant Sabbath school scholar has an amount of useful religious knowledge, to which the wisest heathen can make no pretension.

In this connection, let me urge you to avail yourselves of the inestimable advantages for intellectual as well as moral culture offered by the Bible class and Sabbath school. These institutions are pre-eminently adapted to your circumstances, while engaged in manufacturing pursuits. If properly improved, they will compensate, in no inconsiderable degree, for your want of time for reading and study.

But after all, the pulpit is the grand source of mental and moral illumination. It is a radiating point, diffusing on every side, light, intelligence, wisdom. A church-going community is a well-

educated community. The Bible, which it is the business of the pulpit to expound, is an exhaustless source of information. Sir William Jones, who was master of twenty-six languages, and who, of course, must be regarded as a competent judge on such a subject, says, "The Scriptures contain, independently of their divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected, within the same compass, from all other books that were ever composed in any age, or in any idiom." Much of the intellectual, as well as moral greatness of such men as Bacon, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Hale, and Milton, is to be attributed to a profound study of the Bible. If then, my young friends, you would be "as plants grown up in your youth, and as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace," be the habitual, humble students of the word of God. Let your seats in the sanctuary always be filled. Prosecute with vigor, and by all the means in your power, a course of intellectual improvement; and that improvement, if connected with holiness of heart, will fit you for more elevated communion with the minds of heaven.

LECTURE III.

ESTABLISHED AND CORRECT RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES.

DAN. III. 18.—But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

SUCH was the decisive reply of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three young men, to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, when he commanded them to worship a golden image which he had set up, on pain of being cast into a burning fiery furnace. Nebuchadnezzar had made an enormous image of gold, about ninety feet in height, and placed it in the midst of an extensive plain. He then issued a proclamation to all the princes, the governors, the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the hundred and twenty provinces over which he reigned, to assemble together to celebrate the dedication of the image. In obe-

dience to the royal mandate, an immense number of the officers of his kingdom, from all parts of the empire, assembled in the plain of Dura, in the presence of the idol. When every thing was in readiness, "a herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up : and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." When the concerted signal was given, all the people, nations, and languages, with the exception of these three young men, fell down and worshipped the golden image. Report was immediately carried to the king, that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, refused to join in the general homage, which was paid to the idol. Then Nebuchadnezzar, in his rage and fury, summoned these young men before him. And he spake and said unto them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" He then offered them another trial. "Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and

dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made ; *well* : but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace ; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand ? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. *But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*" Here was a signal example of inflexible adherence to sound religious principles. These youth were Jews. They had been carried captive from Jerusalem to Babylon. They were firmly attached to the only true religion, and to worship the golden image would be a violation of the first and second commandments of the decalogue. They had correct religious principles, and they would not sacrifice them, though the burning fiery furnace was in sight. I shall not pursue the sacred narrative further, and rehearse the increased fury of the king—the heating of the furnace to a seven fold intensity—the casting of the young men into the terrible

flame—their miraculous rescue by the interposition of Jehovah—the astonishment of Nebuchadnezzar when he found they had received no injury—and their subsequent promotion in the province of Babylon.

My present object is, to invite your attention, with this example before us, to the importance of your having—

ESTABLISHED AND CORRECT RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES.

The subject naturally divides itself into two branches.

I. Your religious principles should be *established*. And,

II. They should be *correct*.

I. You should have *established* religious principles.

In all communities, and especially in those composed, as this is, of people from different parts of the country and of the world, there is apt to be not only a great variety of religious opinion, but also a great want of religious principle. By a certain class, it is deemed to be unbigoted and popular to have no settled principles on the subject of religion. In their view, one system of doctrine is about as good as another; and to have *no* system, is quite as good as to have any. Hence,

they are continually in the wind. They attend one meeting to-day, another the next Sabbath, and a third the Sabbath after, and approve of all the sentiments they hear, although they may be contradictory, or disapprove of the whole because they are contradictory. Such a state of mind is truly dangerous and deplorable. It may serve to increase your estimate of the immense importance of established principles, to take a view of the causes and evils of instability of religious opinion.

Among the *causes* of this instability, the following are the more prominent.

1. *A peculiar structure of the mental constitution.* Some persons seem to be by nature more unstable than others. This appears in all their operations in relation to every subject. You see it in their plans, which are frequently made, and as frequently relinquished. You see it in their opinions; suddenly formed, and as suddenly changed. You see it in their principles; moved by some to-day, and by opposite ones to-morrow. They are the creatures of mere impulse. Having no mind of their own, they calculate to be led by others. Independence is no ingredient in such a character. This constitutional instability is carried into the subject of religion. Their principles, if they can be said to have any, are so pliant, that

they easily accommodate themselves to all the sinuosities of religious opinion which exist. Hence, it is not a little curious to observe, what different opinions are formed of them by others. By some, they are called Universalists; by others, Unitarians; by others, infidels; and by others, men of sound principle. And all this, because, having no fixed sentiments, they accommodated their principles to the companies into which they happened to fall. A part of the instability under consideration, may be accounted for on the score of this peculiarity of mental structure.

2. *Defective early religious education.* It is affecting to see what multitudes of children and youth are growing up, in this age of biblical instruction, without any religious education. Suppose you were to collect together indiscriminately one thousand youth, who belong in this village, and who came from different parts of the country, and should inquire of them all what was their religious education at home, and they should give you an honest reply, what would probably be the development? You would doubtless find not a few results of great parental faithfulness. Many of these youth would tell you how their parents dedicated them to God in baptism in their infancy, and with many prayers and tears set them apart

to be the Lord's forever. They would tell you how their very earliest recollections are associated with the subject of religion ; how, as their little minds expanded, a pious father or mother sowed in them the good seed of the word, and prayed for the future harvest. They would tell you how a father's counsels, or a mother's supplications preserved the tottering steps of their infancy, and sobered the playfulness of their childhood, and rescued them from the temptations of their youth. They would tell you how the frequent, affectionate and judicious conversation of their parents with them about their souls, and the Bible, and God, and heaven, and hell, planted religious principles within them, as immovable as the everlasting hills. And they would tell you that they would not barter those baptisms, and counsels, and prayers, and tears, for all the wealth of creation. This class of our youth are firmly fixed in the great doctrines of the Bible. You know where to find them. They are not carried about by every wind of doctrine.

"Immortal principles forbid"

them to make shipwreck of the faith, or of their souls.

But you would find, perhaps, that a large

majority of this collection of youth were very differently educated at home. Some would tell you, with weeping, that their father and mother died when they were quite small, and that they were left to the instructions of others, who felt less interested in their welfare. Others might tell you that their father is an Universalist; that he neglects the sanctuary—opposes the Sabbath school and the temperance society—never prays in his family, nor instructs his children in the things of religion, unless it be to teach them to *hate* its distinguishing truths. Others might tell you that their parents, though strictly orthodox and moral, are not pious; and that they themselves were never taken away to the closet and prayed with alone, or solemnly addressed on the subject of their salvation. In short, if you should ascertain how this collection of youth were educated at home, you would be profoundly astonished at the *small amount* of sound, direct religious instruction which they received. This is another prominent cause of their present instability on the subject of religion.

3. The existence of *numerous denominations* of Christians. That the Christian church is divided into numerous sects, is a fact which, though it may be attended with some advantages, is replete with

serious evils. Not the least of these evils is the scepticism, which it generates in the minds of the young. Many of them are led by it to the conclusion, that it matters little what opinions they embrace, or whether they embrace any. The inference they draw from the premises is utterly adverse to their establishment in the faith once delivered to the saints. Many a youth is held, for years if not for life, in a state of suspense on a subject, where definite opinions are infinitely necessary, because professed Christians are no more harmonious in their faith. Such youth are subject to the attracting influences of different denominations, and are held in equilibrium between them all. The consequence is, that they have no settled opinions. They are carried about by every wind of doctrine. They are "ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Under the influence of these circumstances, many of them embrace the grosser forms of error, and make shipwreck of their immortal interests. It will not be known till the disclosures of the last day, how much denominational differences among Christians have done in diffusing infidelity, and in whelming souls in perdition.

4. *The misconduct of some Christian professors.* It pleases God, for holy and wise reasons,

occasionally to suffer his real children to fall into sin, and thus to bring serious reproach on his cause. In this sense, he suffered David to fall, and Peter to fall. It also pleases Him to have a church, in this probationary state, which is by no means free from unholy members. Hypocrites and self-deceivers are often found within the hallowed pale of his visible kingdom. One of the twelve disciples of our Lord was a traitor and a devil. Five of the ten virgins were foolish. It is quite possible, that these relative proportions of the unsound to the sound obtain among the churches of the present day. Here, then, in the inconsistency between the professions and the practice of many visible believers, we find a powerful cause of the unsettled state of religious opinion among the youth. But I would here enter my solemn protest against the practice of making religion answerable for the misconduct of its enemies, or the indiscretions of its friends. These delinquencies are not the fruits of religion, but of irreligion. They are the offspring, not of piety, but of depravity. A great increase of holiness in the church, instead of multiplying such evils, would work their extermination. Indeed, there is no other remedy. The only possible remedy is a great, an indefinite augmentation of that very

spirit, which is ungenerously charged with being the author of the evils in question. And yet it must be admitted, that to the misconduct of some Christian professors, much of the practical infidelity of the young is referable. That a cause of such infidelity should exist within the precincts of the church, is deeply to be deplored ; but, on that account, to abandon the great principles of Christianity, and plunge into the abyss of scepticism, is the height of infatuation.

But the greatest cause of instability of religious principle is

5. *A depraved heart.* This is the fountain-head from which this bitter stream flows. When you see a young man vascillating between opposite religious opinions—balancing between truth and error, you may know that he is under the influence of a depraved heart. Such halting between two opinions—opinions as wide asunder, in their nature and influence, as heaven is from hell, is an infallible indication of deep-seated depravity. Unregenerate men do not love the truth. There is something in the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, which excites their strong aversion. Now, the difficulty is not in these truths, for they are holy, just, and good ; but it lies in the disposition of their hearts. Their hearts are “desperately

wicked." This is the principal cause of the fluctuation of their religious principles.

Let us now look at some of the *evils* of this instability.

1. It tends to *universal scepticism*. When the mind becomes unsettled on the main points of Christianity, none can tell how far the evil will spread. It is like the letting out of water. Open but a small orifice in the embankment, and soon the whole will be swept away. A small leak, unless stopped, will sink the largest ship. A single spark may wrap half a city in flames. A young man, with no fixed religious principles, is like a vessel at sea without chart, or compass, or helm, the sport of every tempest, and liable to be driven to a returnless distance from port. The spirit of scepticism, when once it obtains possession of the heart, spreads like contagion. It soon extends to all the great and essential truths of revealed religion—to the doctrines of natural theology—and to the fundamental principles of sound morality. Its creed is summarily this ;—" I believe in all unbelief."

Now I appeal to all the youth before me, and ask, can this be a desirable state of mind? Does it confer happiness? Or rather, is it not the very essence of misery? Let experience judge.

2. It precludes *serious* and *long continued reflection on the interests of the soul*. That the interests of the soul are sufficiently momentous to claim your most serious and persevering attention, I will not insult your understandings to argue. Surely if there be any interests below the sun, which challenge your first regard, they are these. If there be any subject on which *settled*, as well as sound principles are important, it is that of your eternal destiny. Now, my position is, that the unsettled, fluctuating principles of some youth, on the subject of religion, are most adverse to the best interests of the soul. They close the avenues of truth. They preclude deep seriousness. They render protracted reflection on the interests of the soul impossible. No sooner is the attention arrested, than the habit of doubting comes to its relief. No sooner is the person alarmed, than his habitual scepticism administers an opiate to conscience, and quiets his distress. His seasons of seriousness, which are "few and far between," are not of sufficient duration to annihilate his spirit of scepticism. In this contest between solicitude and thoughtlessness, the worse ordinarily get the mastery of the better principles. This process is likely to be repeated as often as conscience admonishes him ; till she gradually ceases

to remonstrate, and he is swept down the current of life to that precipice, where all hope expires, and the last plunge must be made, and damnation begins.

This instability is

3. A *fatal obstacle* to your embracing religion. I say this obstacle is *fatal* to your salvation ; and I say so advisedly, and for the purpose of disclosing its true character and results. I would, indeed, set no limits to the omnipotence of divine grace. We are not called upon to determine what God *can* do, even in these most adverse circumstances ; but what, according to his ordinary laws of operation, he may be expected to do. With this rule of reasoning, I may safely pronounce your situation hopeless, so long as your religious principles are unsettled. There are no data, on which to build an argument to urge you to repentance. It would be like attempting to erect an Egyptian pyramid upon the restless waves of the ocean. You must have some fixed principles, before the gospel can take effect. If, then, you value eternal life, if you have a soul worth more than all the wealth of the universe, and if that soul cannot be saved, except through the medium of certain principles which tend to conversion, what words can express the importance of those prin-

ciples? The holding of those principles will not, indeed, insure you eternal life, but the persevering rejection of them will inevitably bar your entrance into it.

Unsettled principles on the subject of religion,

4. Will prepare you for a *gloomy death*, and a *hopeless eternity*. I will illustrate this point, by referring you to a few examples. Hobbes, a man of sceptical principles, found the grave shrouded in such impervious gloom, that he exclaimed, with his dying breath, "I am going to take a leap in the dark." Gibbon, only twenty-four hours before he died, to divert his attention from the scene before him, set himself to calculating the probability that he might live fifteen years, and confessed that as life wore away, it gave "a browner tint to the prospects of man." Hume, to smother the awful reflections, which, in his last moments, crowded upon his soul, tried to assume the appearance of entire unconcern. He jokes about Lucian, and Charon, and the crazy boat, and the fabled Styx. He frames various reasons, which he might assign for delaying his transmission. He tries games at whist. He revises his infidel writings, and finishes his Essay recommending suicide to all who are in trouble, and died as a fool dieth. Paine, in his last moments cried out, "O

Lord, help me ! O Christ, help me !” He was afraid to be left alone. He declared, “If the devil has an agent on earth, I am the one.” Being asked, whether he wished to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, with his characteristic scepticism “strong in death,” he replied, “I have no wish to believe on that subject ;” and yet, a few moments after, he invoked the name of the Saviour, in a tone of voice that alarmed the house. In one of his paroxysms of mental agony, he exclaimed, “I think I can say, what they make Jesus Christ to say,—“*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” When Voltaire thought himself dying, he sent for the Abbe Gauthier, crying out, “I do not wish to have my body cast into the common sewer.” As death approached, his terrors overcame him. D’Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of his sceptical associates beset his apartment to reassure and comfort him in his last agonies ; but he would curse them, and exclaim, “Begone, it is you who have brought me to my present state.” One moment, he would cry, “O Christ !” “O Jesus Christ !” the next, he would blaspheme. His physician, calling in to administer relief, thunderstruck, retired. The Maréchal de Richelieu fled from his bedside, declaring it to be a sight too terrible to be sustained,

and M. Tronchin observed, that the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire.

These are thy fruits, O infidelity ; these thy joys, thy consolations, thy triumphs in death. "O my soul, come not thou into its secret ; unto its assembly, mine honor, be not thou united ! "

I have now spread before you a view of the causes and evils of instability of religious faith. And can any one fail to perceive, that unsettled, sceptical principles are infinitely dangerous, and established principles of infinite importance ? If you would avoid the present anxieties and eternal horrors of infidelity, cling, like the three young men in Babylon, to the great truths of the Bible. Let your religious principles, like theirs, be so firmly fixed, that not the terrors of martyrdom can move them.

The way is now prepared to show

II. That your religious principles should be *correct*. This, if possible, is of more importance, than that they should be fixed. Principles, which involve every degree of error, may become very firmly established, through their congeniality with the feelings of a depraved heart. Under the influence of depravity, men are much more likely to embrace error than truth. Hence, all youth

are in imminent danger of imbibing those erroneous principles, which will jeopardize their salvation. This part of our subject is of ineffable importance to you all ; but want of time requires me to compress my remarks upon it, into as narrow a compass as possible.

It is the great object of religion, to save the soul. Your religious principles should be sound and scriptural, because error has *no tendency* to do this. Any principles, which have *no tendency* to do that for us, which religion was designed to do, are obviously unsafe. Now, I fearlessly maintain, that the grosser errors which infest the community have no tendency to save, but every tendency to destroy. Those religious systems, which reject the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the reality and literal eternity of future misery, and the supreme Deity and atonement of Jesus Christ, have no tendency to effect regeneration, for the substantial reason that they deny its necessity.*

* In the text, no comparison is attempted of these errors themselves. The author does not undertake to decide whether they are equally removed from the truth. Their conflicting claims to pre-eminence, he does not assume to settle. The settlement of that question, if it be worth any pains, he leaves to those who are interested in its decision. All that he is concerned to show is, that they are void of any tendency to produce evangelical holiness.

It is believed that no person, under the inculcation of these principles only, was ever convinced of his lost condition as a sinner, or made to feel as the three thousand did on the day of Pentecost, or as the Jews often did under the preaching of Christ, or as Felix and Agrippa did under the preaching of Paul. It is my firm conviction, that under the exhibition of these sentiments, unmixed with truth, no person was ever heard to cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" or has been made to love and constantly to practice secret prayer, or ever gave any other evidence of scriptural conversion. I appeal to the whole history of the world, I appeal to your own experience and observation for the support of these positions. I challenge all men to cite one case, where these systems, in their legitimate results as religious systems, have brought a sinner to the foot of the cross. Such a case, it is believed, has never been known. If then, these sentiments, which are so industriously propagated, and which unsanctified men are very apt to embrace, have *no tendency* to make us feel, as the preaching of Christ and his apostles made men feel, I beseech you to reject them. Spurn them from you as you would a viper. Let your religious principles be as sound as the Bible. Embrace the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and you shall be saved.

The *practical influence* of the great doctrines of the Bible on the hearts and lives of men also shows the importance of those doctrines. The truths to which I refer are such as these;—the total native depravity of every human heart,—the indispensable necessity of regeneration,—the uncompromising claims of the divine law,—the universality and efficacy of the atonement,—the entire dependence of every sinner on sovereign grace for salvation,—his ability and consequent obligation to repent without any delay,—the unconditional election of a certain part of mankind to eternal life,—the necessity of special divine influence to renew the heart, arising from the otherwise incorrigible obstinacy of the sinner,—and the eternal duration of the blessedness of the righteous, and of the punishment of the wicked. These, and other kindred truths of the Scriptures exert an influence on mankind, which is both salutary and immense. A faithful exhibition of these doctrines makes men feel solemn. Under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, they extort from many a person the momentous inquiry—"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" They often bring the inquiring sinner to a cordial, grateful acceptance of the terms of salvation. They make him ever after a man of prayer. If he was before

ambitious, they humble him. If he was covetous, they make him benevolent. If he was licentious, they purify his heart and life. In short, if there be any moral goodness on earth, it is owing to the instrumentality of the doctrines of the Bible. If heaven is fast filling up with souls redeemed from the ruins of the apostacy, that glorious work is advancing solely under the auspices of the doctrines of the cross, made effectual by the Holy Spirit sent down from above.

The whole history of the propagation of Christianity shows, that nothing permanently and savingly interests men in the subject of religion, but these great truths. Robert Dale Owen, Frances Wright, Abner Kneeland, and Hosea Ballou, may interest, for a short time, a collection of thoughtless, pleasure-loving, theatre-going youth;—they may occasionally draw together large assemblages of that class of people, but the great moving principles are three;—*curiosity, love of error, and hatred of the truth.* But the doctrines of grace exert a wide and permanent interest. Large communities are held together by their power from year to year and from age to age, as the principle of gravitation binds together the immense masses, which compose the solar system. It is not curiosity nor love of controversy which interests the

evangelical part of the community so deeply and permanently, but it is love of the truth, and a profound reverence of its Author. It was the exhibition of the great doctrines of revelation, which spread Christianity over nearly the whole of the known world during the first three centuries of the Christian era; which wrought such wonders in the time of the Reformation; which has filled New England with school-houses and churches; which has multiplied revivals over the whole extent of our country; which has given birth to the missionary movements of the age; and is fast disenthraling, regenerating and elevating to heaven the nations of the earth. Here, then, you see the importance of your embracing and maintaining the truth, in its purity and power. Error, however popular, cannot sanctify and save. Nothing but the doctrines of the cross, admitted to your hearts, in all their humbling, transforming energies, can bring you into a harmonious and delightful relation to God and all holy beings.

Two remarks will close the discourse.

1. The subject exposes the fallacy of the maxim, that it is *no matter what a man believes, provided he is sincere*. It is just as important to believe *correctly*, as to believe sincerely. It is just as necessary to believe the *truth*, as it is im-

portant to save the soul. Sincerity is neither the test of truth, nor a substitute for truth. Men may be very sincere in believing error, even soul-destroying error. Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, "*verily thought* that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth," but he soon found, notwithstanding his sincerity, that he was then on the high road to perdition. Pagans, by their costly sacrifices and self-inflicted tortures, give every proof of sincerity, and yet, according to the Bible, they are sinking by generations into hell. "No matter what a man believes, provided he is sincere!" A very unsound, but a very favorite maxim with men of latitudinarian sentiments; a maxim, which goes to obliterate all distinction between truth and error—right and wrong; a maxim, which is peopling the bottomless pit with deluded souls. In this connection, I cannot forbear to remark, that, not all Pope's talent at pouring forth harmony of numbers, can atone for the mischief, which a single couplet of his has occasioned;—

"For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

This adage contains a very convenient equivocate. There is a sense in which it is correct; and there

is another, which is more generally embraced, and which favors the utmost latitudinarianism, which the depraved heart can desire. All experience, however, goes to show, that a man's faith *will* affect his practice ; and that a cordial belief in the doctrines of the Bible will issue in something more than merely a moral life. It will result in a life of unfeigned piety.

But, even on theoretical grounds, correct faith is ineffably important. A man who believes the Bible will feel differently from an infidel. A man, who believes regeneration to be indispensable to salvation, will have more solicitude about it, than one who disbelieves it. A man, who believes that the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment," will be more likely to escape "the wrath to come," than one who rejects this declaration of Jesus Christ.

I beseech you, then, habitually to feel the high importance of sound principles. They are your life. Throw them not away. Cleave to them with all your hearts. They are to you, what the life-boat is to the drowning mariner—the only means of salvation.

2. There is no *effectual safeguard* against the destructive influence of unstable and erroneous sentiments, but a *change of the heart*. I know

that a real Christian may be led into a variety of erroneous opinions, but they will be of minor importance. A true friend of God cannot embrace fundamental error. *His heart is right.* That operates, in all seasons of temptation, like the anchor of a ship in a storm. It holds him safe. His safety, however, does not consist in the strength of his piety, but in the grace and power of God. He is kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation. All the energies of Omnipotence are pledged for his security, and his salvation is certain.

And now, my young friends, if you would be saved from the destructive errors, to which you are exposed, become Christians. Feel that you have no security, till you have a renewed heart. You may think your present principles strong enough to stand the hour of trial. So did Hazael. When the prophet told him of what horrible enormities he would be guilty, he exclaimed, "What ! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ?" And yet, under the power of temptation, his better principles gave way, and he committed the very atrocities, which the prophet predicted. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." You have no security, but in the grace which God will give his children.

Embrace, then, if you have not already, that religion, which made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego prefer the fiery furnace to disobedience to God. Their principles stood the trial, and it was because their principles were those of the *heart*, as well as of the understanding. If, like them, you would abide the hour of temptation, admit the religion of the gospel to immediate and entire dominion over you. Then, you will be living illustrations of the uncompromising integrity of the Christian character ; and, when you leave this, for a higher sphere of service in the heavens, these lines will form no inappropriate inscription to your memories ;—

“ Servant of God, well done !
For this was all thy care,
To stand *approv'd in sight of God*,
Though world's judg'd thee perverse.”

LECTURE IV.

DANGERS OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

1 Cor. xv. 33.—*Evil communications corrupt good manners.*

It cannot have escaped the notice of any attentive observer of mankind, that the season of childhood and early youth is comparatively unsophisticated with error and immorality. Not that that period of life exhibits no indications of depravity ; for depravity is, in all cases, coeval with the existence of moral character. Not that persons in the earlier part of life are but partially depraved ; for the degree of depravity in every case is total,—that is, there is an entire absence of holiness by nature. Not that there are no instances of children and youth committing some of the most atrocious crimes ; for such instances sometimes occur. But notwithstanding these exceptions and qualifications, the general remark is still true, that persons in quite early life are com-

paratively free from error in principle, and viciousness in practice. There is generally an artlessness in their manners, a simplicity in their practice, and a freedom from gross error in their faith. But when the period arrives for entrance upon the active business of life, it ordinarily constitutes an epoch in the history of the individual. What parent, who has ever sent a son to college, or bound him to an apprenticeship, or put him into a manufactory, but felt, when he was doing it, that it would probably be a *crisis* in the destiny of that child. Often has the anxious father, when the time of separation arrived, accompanied his son to the door, and bade him farewell, saying,

“ My child, the unwelcome hour is come,
When thou, transplanted from thy genial home,
Must find a colder soil, and bleaker air,
And trust for safety to a stranger's care.”

Often has the affectionate mother, when called to commit her son to the temptations of the world, and exchanged with him the last adieu, gone away to her closet as her only consolation, and committed him to the keeping of Israel's God. When the inexperienced youth enters upon his new scene of life, and finds himself associated with new companions, and assailed by new temptations,

then comes the *trial of his principles*. What a moment in his history ! It is a moment replete with interest and with danger. And what youth, who has been nurtured at home in the school of correct principles, and now brought to the trial, while his parents are trembling for the result, does not tremble for himself. Perhaps there are hundreds of youth before me, who are now undergoing this severe experiment. Many of you have but recently entered upon the active scenes of life. Many of you are far away from the safeguards of home, while the palpitating hearts of your parents, if they are not cold in death, and their midnight prayers for your safety, give evidence of ceaseless anxiety for your welfare. You are now placed in circumstances of trial, and the event alone can determine, whether "evil communications" will "corrupt" your "good manners."

My object, in this lecture, is to state,

I. The principal *evils* to which youth, in your circumstances, are exposed,

II. The *means and process* by which many youth, similarly situated, have been ruined, and

III. *What can be done to rescue* the young from the dangers which surround them.

I. What are the more prominent *evils* to which youth are exposed? Among these, *intemperance*

holds no inferior place. Perhaps in no village in this region, has the temperance reformation found greater favor than in this. But the means of intoxication and ruin are still here. They are sold, and their sale is licensed by law ; while the vending of lottery tickets, an evil by no means as great as the other, is prohibited. I cannot forbear, in passing, to express the hope, that this traffic, instead of being encouraged by legislation, will soon be banished from the country by being made penal.

There may be youth in this village, who are now gradually and insensibly forming habits of intemperance ;—habits, which may yet consume their property, blast their reputation, hurry them to a premature death, and bring down the gray hairs of their parents with sorrow to the grave. The hearts of parents are exquisitely sensitive with respect to the exposure of their children to this vice. I will illustrate this fact by an example. Some years ago, there was a bright and promising youth, who was “ the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.” Falling under the influence of bad company, he soon lost his love of home, and all sense of obligation to his aged dependent mother—wandered away to a distant part of the country, and spent his substance in riotous living.

Many an anxious month and year rolled slowly away, while she could hear nothing from her son, except that he was notoriously abandoned. In process of time, as she was shivering one cold December's evening over a few embers, which constituted all her fire, her heart bursting within her as she thought of her prospects and of her profligate son, she was aroused by a rap at the door. Permission being given, a stranger entered. After the customary salutations were exchanged, and the stranger seated, he kindly inquired, "Is your name Mary Judson?" for that is the designation, by which I would introduce her to your acquaintance. "Yes, sir," was her reply. "And have you a son by the name of Joseph Judson?" continued the stranger. If a flash of lightning had that instant struck her dwelling, it would not have agitated her frame more than the simple mention of that dear name. "I have, sir, if he is alive," she instantly rejoined, "and do you know him?" "Yes, madam, I saw him about six weeks since, far beyond the Alleghanies." "But how does he do?" inquired the trembling mother, endeavoring to draw from the stranger information, not so much respecting his health, as his conduct. "Bad enough," "bad enough," was the heart-breaking reply. "But I wish to know one thing in partic-

ular, Is he *intemperate* ? ” “ No, madam, I am happy to say, that although he is guilty of almost every other sin, which disgraces humanity, he does not use ardent spirits.” “ Then,” exclaimed the mother with tears of joy, “ there is hope of him ; Joseph, my son, my only son, is yet alive, and if he is not intemperate, I may see him before I die.” Time rolled on ; and finally, this abandoned youth, through the influence of his mother’s prayers, and his abstinence from intoxicating drinks, became entirely reformed—returned to his broken-hearted mother—comforted her in her advanced age—closed her dying eyes—committed her to the grave, and shed many a tear over the memory of her, who had so often prayed and wept for him. Many a parent, my young friends, feels, as did this mother, respecting the sin of intemperance. If their sons are not addicted to *that* vice, they feel that there is yet hope ; but if they are, generally all hope is extinguished.

Profaneness is another sin to which youth are exposed. This is a sin, which can plead no temptation or excuse. No craving appetite, no irresistible propensity, no hope of gain, compels a man to swear. Neither is it any sign of politeness or veracity, but it is rather an infallible indication of vulgarity and disregard of truth. No man respects

the profane swearer, or receives his most solemn asseverations, backed by oaths, but with many grains of allowance. Lord Chesterfield, a master in the school of politeness, declares, that such language is never that of a gentleman.

“To swear, is neither brave, polite, nor wise.”

Jesus Christ, who has pronounced an irreversible sentence of exclusion from the kingdom of heaven against the man of incorrigible profaneness, also says, “Swear not at all; but let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.” I am happy in being able to say, that profaneness, like intemperance, is fast receiving the disapprobation of all respectable men, that it is much less practiced than formerly, and that, under the condemnation of public opinion, there is hope that it will soon entirely cease. Young men, frown upon this vice wherever you meet it, and it will shortly be banished from society.

Licentiousness is another vice, which often be-
sets youth. This is a subject of great delicacy, and is too rarely made a topic of discussion in the pulpit. Public attention, however, has recently been directed anew to the subject, and the evil has been found to exist, in an alarming degree, not

only in our large cities, but also in the villages and towns of the country. Let every youth, who has any regard to his reputation, his peace, his happiness, his usefulness, or his eternal salvation, beware of this vice. "Flee youthful lusts." Chastise the roving of an impure imagination. When temptation is presented, your courage will be best illustrated, and your safety best consulted, not by parleying, but by flight. Escape instantly from this enchanted, this forbidden ground. "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

Vain amusements, such as balls and theatrical exhibitions, are also attended with danger. I know that youth and others must have their seasons of relaxation and amusement; a proper regard to health requires them. But they should be of such physical character as to improve, not impair health; and of such moral bearing as to purify, not pollute the affections.

Young people are also more or less exposed to the contaminating influence of *erroneous religious principles*. Some of these principles were mentioned in the last lecture. If you were educated religiously at home, your parents and friends feel no little solicitude on this point, especially if they have reason to believe, that your religious prin-

ciples are not firmly established. The heart of many a parent has been rent asunder, by hearing that an absent child had embraced some of the soul-destroying errors, which infest the community. Respect, then, whatever of sound instruction your parents have given you. Wisdom addresses you in these terms ;—" My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother ; for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck."

Violating the Sabbath is another sin of which youth are in danger. This may be done by unnecessary labor, travelling, walking the streets and fields, amusements, and by the indulgence of worldly thoughts and affections. A strict and conscientious observance of the Sabbath is indispensable to your highest respectability, usefulness and happiness. Revere the Sabbath, and love the sanctuary. Let no temptations, however strong, induce you to infringe, in the slightest degree, upon the hours of holy rest. Your pious parents and friends will indeed have occasion to rejoice over your prospects for life and for eternity, if you invariably "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Such are the *dangers* to which you are more particularly exposed ; let us now examine

II. The *means and process* by which many youth have become erroneous in principle, and bankrupt in morals. The principal means are pointed out in the text. "*Evil communications* corrupt good manners." Many youth are ruined through the *example and influence of bad associates*. Let us suppose the case of an artless, unsuspecting youth, who has just come from his home among the Green Mountains of Vermont, to enter a manufactory, or to engage in some other employment in a thickly populated village. The means and process of his ruin, I will attempt briefly to sketch ; and the picture has had its prototype in thousands of instances in our land. It is a scene, which, I hope, has never been, and never may be enacted here. On arriving at his new place of abode, this youth finds himself in circumstances, to which he is entirely unaccustomed. The scenery around him is quite unlike that of his native hills. His boarding-house, with its paraphernalia, is a novelty. His employment is new—his associates are strangers. The *tout-ensemble*—the whole character of his new residence is such as makes a deep impression upon his feelings. Every thing is novel and exciting. He is now in that impressible state, which prepares him to be *acted upon*, with prodigious effect, by influences,

which never reached him in the retirement of his father's house. Many of his associates, as is too often the case, are perhaps men of lax religious principles, and are living in the habitual transgression of the rules of sound morality. They mark the unsuspecting youth for their victim. They take pains to *become acquainted with him*. They perceive his simplicity, and his ignorance of the world. Sometimes the mode of attack is bold and direct. More generally, it is covert and circuitous. If the latter mode be adopted, they proceed gradually and cautiously to *sound his principles*. They find the point, where he can be most successfully assailed. With no apparent intention of *affecting him*, and as it were almost accidentally, they utter in his hearing, with half suppressed voice, a profane oath. Or, they set before him an example of violating the Sabbath, or of drinking ardent spirits, or of using the language of obscenity; or they throw out oblique insinuations against the divine authority of the Scriptures, and the truth of its distinguishing doctrines. When the youth first hears or sees such violations of all he has been accustomed to deem sacred, his better feelings are shocked. Soon, however, the same process is repeated, and, if possible, with greater adroitness, and probably

with greater success. They perhaps gently insinuate, that, although such things may not be considered exactly right by the unenlightened, straight-laced puritans of his native town, they are freely practiced and approved by all the liberal, independent and high-minded young men in this part of the country. They do not fail to appeal to that most sensitive of all feelings in young men as they are entering upon life, namely, *a regard for his reputation among his fellows*. They intimate to him, that if he would be respected by his companions, and be regarded as a young gentleman of liberality and independence of mind, he must give up the contracted notions instilled into him in his childhood, and enter fully into their more enlarged views, and liberal practices. Unfavorably impressed, as he probably is, by such infringements of sound principles and morals, the leaven of mischief has nevertheless begun to work in his susceptible and depraved heart. A breach having been made in the barriers thrown around him by his education,—the Rubicon having been passed, the process of declension advances. His wily companions, perceiving his better principles beginning to give way, are careful to follow up their advantage. Erroneous principles are more frequently started in his hearing. Immoralities, of

the less repulsive kind, are oftener practiced in his presence. Intimations are incidentally made, that to do such things are indications of an unfettered, manly spirit. No arts are left untried to infuse into his moral constitution the virus of heretical principles, and to lead him gradually into habits of vice. The walls of defence, which early education had reared around his morals, having been scaled, and the work of dilapidation commenced, his professed friends, but real enemies, determine to proceed in their unholy conquest, till not one stone shall be left upon another.

The unwary youth, with an evil heart—with his principles unfortified by regeneration and the grace of God, in the midst of associates whom he respects for their superior age and greater knowledge of business and of the world, with such skillful appeals to his pride of reputation, and with such examples before him of evil doing by persons, claiming the highest degree of information and respectability—gradually, and with many an inward pang, and with many a thought of his parents, yields himself to the power of the destroyer.

“Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
That to be hated, needs but to be seen ;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

In this conflict between his better principles, and the powers that would work his ruin, the forces are entirely unequal. There is a fearful odds against him.

Now, it is scarcely in human nature successfully to withstand such well-conducted attacks. One principle after another gives way. One error after another is embraced. One vice after another is practiced. Conscience, at the outset, rung indeed fearful notes of alarm through the chambers of his soul, but her voice has been gradually silenced. The pleasures of sinful indulgence are found to be sweet. The power of temptation waxes stronger and stronger, while that of resistance grows weaker and weaker. His progress down the current of destruction was at first slow and gradual. But it has become more and more rapid. The stream grows broader and deeper. He is swept along with increasing and terrible velocity towards that awful cataract, of whose horrors, Niagara affords no conception.

He now begins to lose his love of his parents, and his respect for their feelings and instructions. Their prayers for his safety among strangers, he gives to the idle wind. He writes home less frequently, and with more reserve. He informs them, indeed, that he is pleased with his situation.

He passes encomiums upon his companions. He describes his prospects as unexpectedly promising. His health never was better. He exhorts his parents to feel no anxieties respecting him. But all this while, he carefully conceals from them the change which has taken place in his principles, and the immoralities of which he is guilty. To tell them the whole truth on this subject, he knows would give them a shock, little less than apoplectic. He has filial regard enough left to save them from the nameless pangs, which a knowledge of his principles and life would create. He therefore in his letters preserves a studied silence on the very topics, respecting which, a good, an anxious parent most of all desires information. The pleasantness of his place of residence—the interest he feels in his employment—the agreeableness of his companions—the alleged brightness of his prospects, and even the perfection of his health, are matters of small moment with them, if his silence respecting his moral habits has excited the suspicion that all is not right there. If their suspicions are awakened, and they see them awakened, too, by the very means he had used to prevent it, they are alarmed, as if a bolt from heaven fell smouldering at their feet.

Fearing the worst, and anxious to know the

truth, they now ply him with interrogatories concerning his religious opinions, his observance of the Sabbath, his habits of temperance, of chastity, of attendance on the duties of the sanctuary, and especially respecting the moral character and principles of his associates. But on these topics, he does not wish to say a word. If he replies at all to their inquiries, he does it in such general terms, and with such ambiguous phraseology, as only serve to confirm suspicion, undermine their confidence in his integrity, and crush their hearts between the upper and nether millstone. More dissatisfied and solicitous than ever, they press their inquiries with greater definiteness and particularity, so as to prevent, if possible, all evasion. Perhaps he has now become so hardened, as to take no notice at all of their communications, though they were wet with the tears of a parent's love. But if he replies, it is in such a style of supercilious contempt for their alleged impertinence in prying into his affairs, and with such bold insinuations of their comparative ignorance and illiberality, of his ability to manage his own concerns, and of his desire to receive no further molestation, that they become heart-broken, and soon find a refuge from affliction in the grave.

And now, the restraints of parental influence

being trampled under foot, every barrier erected by education and conscience being swept away, sinful appetites having obtained giant strength and undisputed empire, the catastrophe hurries on apace. His profligacy has, by this time, thrown him out of employment and of virtuous society; his former companions, if they have not already reached the end of their career to destruction, now abandon him; the gloom of his prospects thickens into night; disease hastens him towards the grave; conscience, as if by way of reprisal, agitates him with the very terrors of perdition; the thunders of divine wrath make all his bones to shake; the lightnings of incensed goodness rive his departing soul; and he sinks—and sinks—and sinks—into a bottomless hell.

Such is substantially the history of many youth; such the means and process of their ruin. *Unprincipled and immoral associates* have destroyed multitudes. “Evil communications corrupt good manners.”

You, my young friends, may now be passing through this same probation, and exposed to these very temptations and dangers. It will therefore be an office of kindness to point out

III. *What can be done to rescue the young from their perilous situation.*

1. *Realize your exposure* to temptation. Many have been ruined through a mere unwillingness to admit the possibility that they could be ruined. An overweening confidence in their security has proved their destruction. It is one of the infirmities of human nature, and especially of inexperienced youth, to consider ourselves *proof* against all temptation. "A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on, and are punished." Think not that your principles are impregnable. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Hazael knew not the strength of his early principles, till they were brought to the trial. *That* proved that they were frail as gossamer. Peter had the utmost confidence in his own integrity, but the remark of a servant made him deny his Master. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." If you keenly feel your constant exposure to temptation, it will put you upon your guard. You will more eagerly avail yourselves of other means of preservation.

2. *Never cease to respect and follow the good instructions* of your parents. I say *good* instructions, for it is the unhappiness of many youth to be contaminated with those which are bad. Erroneous instruction is often worse than none. But

if you were correctly and religiously educated, never become so wise in your own conceit as to place a light value on such an education. Never feel that you have become so enlightened, as to make it safe or proper to despise the counsels of Christian parents. If a man possessed the wisdom of Solomon, it would not exempt him from obligation to obey the instructions of a pious mother. The holy precepts which such a mother instilled into your minds in infancy and childhood, and her many prayers and tears on your behalf, you ought to prize above thousands of gold and silver. Perhaps, as you left home, she put a Bible into your trunk; let that Bible be valued above the gold of Ophir. Perhaps, as you parted, she dropped some counsels upon your ear, as weighty as if they were her dying words; let those counsels be engraven on your heart forever. You can hardly fail of being preserved from immoral courses, if you faithfully practice the instructions of those who gave you being, and whose earthly all is bound up in your respectability and happiness.

3. Be especially careful in your *choice of associates*. Too much importance cannot be attached to this direction. It is fundamental. The influence which young people exert over each other, is absolutely immeasurable. In your intercourse with each

other, you will find almost every shade of religious belief, and nearly every variety of practice. Your opinions and life will be insensibly formed after the models with which you are most familiar. You cannot be intimate with any one, without imperceptibly imbibing his views. Beyond all doubt, more depends, as it respects the formation of character, on *the character of associates*, than on any other circumstance, and perhaps more than on all other circumstances united. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise : but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Language, my young friends, wants power to express the importance of your selecting for your intimate friends, those who are well-principled, wise and virtuous. If then you know a youth of unsound religious principles, or of questionable morals, treat him indeed with perfect propriety, but shun rather than solicit his acquaintance. His personal appearance and bearing may be unusually prepossessing. His treatment of you may be singularly courteous. His knowledge of business and of mankind may be superior to your own. But mark him. Count him not an enemy, much less a friend. He may make an offer of confidential friendship, but firmly and respectfully decline it. Give him to understand, if necessary, that your

principles and his are too dissimilar ever to admit of intimacy. He may use various arts and stratagems to dislodge you from your position, but stand the more firm and erect on your principles. Let whatever he does to gain you be met by a dignified inflexibility. O, could the history of the ruined youth of our land be rehearsed in your hearing, it would make every ear tingle. Quite likely nine tenths of the cases would be found to be the result of the influence of *bad associates*. How does the moral youth become a Sabbath-breaker, or a profane swearer, or a liar, or a lewd person, or a drunkard, or an infidel? By means of the example and influence of companions, who are addicted to those vices, or hold those principles. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Take care, then, whom you choose for your associates. Your respectability, peace, usefulness, salvation; the happiness of your friends, the well-being of society, all, *all* are involved in the choice you make.

4. *Christians should take special pains to become early acquainted with those youthful strangers, who come here to reside, and endeavor to give them a right direction.* The first acquaintances which strangers make are generally the most durable and influential. They never forget

those who *first* take them by the hand, and manifest a deep interest in their welfare. One kind, encouraging word has often won the affections of a stranger's heart, and laid the foundation of an intimacy, which could never be dissolved. Now, who shall secure all the advantages of this early acquaintanceship with strangers? the Christian, or the infidel? the moral, or the immoral man? It has been often remarked, that unprincipled men take more pains, than Christians do, to form these early acquaintances with strangers, and interest them, and secure their confidence. However that may be, good men are doubtless very delinquent in this duty. While they are *purposing* to obtain an introduction to a stranger for the sake of doing him good, another has actually *done* it with a very different motive, and has probably secured his object. The favorable moment for making the *first* impression is now irrecoverably gone; and those who purposed well, but did not immediately act, are often compelled to stand by, and behold the progress of the youth in his precipitous career to destruction, without being able to arrest it. Let those, then, who wish well to the rising generation, thoroughly understand the principle in human nature,—*that first impressions are generally the deepest and most durable.* Let them

endeavor, in all cases, to make those impressions *themselves*; and by so doing, they will rescue multitudes of youth from the power of the destroyer—from temporal and eternal ruin.

5. The last thing, which I would recommend to the youth as a defence against temptation, is to *choose God for your Father and Protector*. Are you far removed from friends and relatives? "The Lord is *nigh* unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Are you orphans, with no parents to counsel and protect you? Say with Christian confidence, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Do you feel your inexperience and danger? Lift up your eyes to Jehovah, and acknowledge, "My Father, thou art the guide of my youth." Give your hearts and your lives to him, and you will be safe. If you stand on the rock of his defence, the highest mountain billow of temptation shall break harmlessly beneath your feet. He loves his children with an everlasting love, and not a hair of their head shall perish. If, in times past, he has divided the sea to give them a passage from their enemies;—if he has rained manna from heaven, and brought water out of the flinty rock to supply their wants;—if he has stopped the sun to aid their victories,

and reprov'd kings for their sakes, saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm;"—if he has done all these things for them, what have you to fear, if you flee to the sanctuary of his power? Accept, then, accept to-day the proffered protection of Almighty God. Do this, and though you live in a corrupted and corrupting world; though temptations beset you, and ten thousand ills betide you; though the heavens gather blackness, and the rains descend, and the floods come, and all your prospects are veiled in darkness, and all your hopes seem lost in the commingling fury of the storm;—your Father will look out of his holy habitation upon the raging elements, and say, "Peace, be still, my children are there!" And suddenly there will be a great calm—and the sun will shine out again—and it will be to you a prelude of CLOUDLESS EVERLASTING DAY.

LECTURE V.

ORIGIN, OBLIGATION, AND PROPER OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

Exodus xx. 8—11.—Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

THE importance of the Christian Sabbath to the present and future well-being of man, is very generally, if not universally, admitted. By its weekly recurrence, it offers him timely and needful rest from labor, perplexity and care. It promotes cleanliness, and health, and intellectual improvement. It divides time into portions the most convenient for the transaction of worldly business, and thus regulates the various intercourse of communities. It recruits the exhausted strength of working animals, and thus makes them more ser-

viceable to man. Indeed, it contributes in a thousand nameless ways, to the temporal comfort and happiness of the human kind.

But these are the minor benefits of the Sabbath. It also recognizes man as an heir to immortality—as a being on probation for eternal blessedness or wo. As such, it offers him a season for retirement, for self-inspection, for reading the Scriptures and other pious books, for repentance, and for private, family and public worship. He is allotted, by special statute, one seventh part of all his time, for the purpose of making preparation for his eternal state. Thus, the Sabbath is the great means of preparing men for future glory. In short, were it not for the Sabbath, religion would soon disappear from the face of the earth, and all communication with heaven cease.

The transmission of the Sabbath, in its purity, from generation to generation, is, therefore, an object of pre-eminent importance. In securing this most important object, much, very much depends upon the youth, and especially upon young men. In a still more emphatic sense, does much depend on the example of young people in manufacturing, and other densely populated villages, because such villages are centres of business, en-

terprise and influence. Their example will either exalt the Sabbath in the respect and affections of the communities around them, or will roll the tide of recreation and business over that consecrated day.

The remarks, on this subject, which I shall submit to your consideration, will be arranged under the following heads :—

I. The *origin*,

II. The *perpetual obligation* of the Sabbath; And

III. The *manner in which it should be observed*.

I. The *origin* of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was instituted by Jehovah immediately after the creation of the heavens and the earth, and was designed to commemorate his cessation or *resting* from that work. This fact we find in the second chapter of Genesis, and is described in these terms; “On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work, which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made.” Here, then, is the scriptural account of the *time when* the Sabbath was instituted. But there are

in the Bible a number of incidental allusions and expressions, which corroborate this conclusion.

The book of Genesis contains the only authentic history of the first twenty-four hundred years after the creation. It cannot therefore be expected, that in so brief a history of twenty-four centuries, we shall find frequent references to the Sabbath. Nor were such references necessary to give permanency to it, for they would serve rather to weaken than to strengthen the obligatory power of a divinely established institution. And yet the Sabbath is, in two or three instances, alluded to in that history. When the waters of the deluge began to subside, Noah sent out a dove, which soon returned. At the end of *seven* days, he sent her out again ; and at the end of *seven* days more, he sent her out a third time. Now, why did he wait in all these cases just *seven* days ? Why did he not wait *six* days, or *ten* days ? Simply because time was then divided, as it now is, into *weeks*. The fair implication therefore is, that the Sabbath then existed, and that weeks were reckoned from the close of one Sabbath to the close of another.

In the twenty-ninth chapter of Genesis, a similar division of time is incidentally mentioned. "Fulfil her *week*, and we will give thee this also. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled his *week*." The

word "week" was always used, except in prophetic discourse, to designate a period of exactly seven days; and this uniform division of time into such periods obviously implied the existence of the Sabbath.

In the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, the pre-existence of the Sabbath is again recognized. When the Israelites were supplied with manna, they were required to gather twice as much on the sixth day of the week as on any other, and Moses assigns this as the reason of that requirement;—"To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." This *mode* of speech plainly implies that the Sabbath previously existed, and not that it was then instituted.

The introductory expression in the text implies the same thing. "*Remember* the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." Here, the injunction to keep the Sabbath holy is incorporated into the code of moral laws, which God gave the Israelites amid the thunderings, and lightnings, and quakings of Sinai, and the way in which the subject is referred to, evidently supposes that the institution previously existed. It is not a customary form of speech to call upon others to "*remember*" that, which had no previous existence.

If, to all these considerations, we add the facts,

that the Sabbath was as much *needed* by the earliest inhabitants of the earth, as by their descendants, and that God was *as much disposed* to consult their good, as the good of others, there seems to remain not a vestige of doubt, that the Sabbath was instituted immediately after the creation, and was designed for the benefit of all mankind from the beginning to the end of the world.

This result, to which we are conducted by an appeal to the Scriptures, is confirmed, although confirmation is unnecessary, by the testimony of ancient authors. Homer and Hesiod say that the seventh day was holy. Porphyry, an infidel, says that the Phœnicians consecrated one day in seven as holy. Philo says that the Sabbath is not a festival peculiar to any one people, or country, but is common to all the world; and that it may be called the general or public feast, or the feast of the *nativity* of the world. Josephus affirms that there is no city either of Greeks, or barbarians, or any other nation, where the religion of the Sabbath is not known. Now, there is no way to account for this wide dissemination of the knowledge of the Sabbath among the earliest postdiluvian nations of the earth, but to suppose that they received it from Noah, their common ancestor, who must have received it through one

generation only, from Adam. Thus, by direct and indirect proof, the existence of the Sabbath can be traced back to the creation.

My next position is

II. That the Sabbath, being coeval with the existence of man, is *perpetually obligatory* upon him.

The *time* when the Sabbath was instituted, shows that it was "made for man"—for all men. It was instituted immediately after the creation of man;—it was the very first divine enactment for the benefit of man;—and was obviously designed to be commensurate with the duration of man upon the earth. It was not enacted, like the ceremonial laws, for the sole observance and benefit of the Jews as a nation, because it was enacted two thousand years before the calling of Abraham the "father" of the Jewish nation, and two thousand five hundred years before the ceremonial laws were given to that people. Besides, this institution was no more *necessary* to the national polity of the Jews, than to that of other nations. Every kindred, tongue and people under the whole heaven, *needs* such an institution as much as did the Jews. The moral wants of all nations, in every age of the world, are substantially the same. That construction therefore is violent and

inadmissible, which makes the Sabbath obligatory upon the *Jews*, and not upon other nations.

Again, the Sabbath is a law of God, and as such, it can cease to be binding only in two ways. It is a settled principle, that all laws continue in force unless they expire *by their own limitations*, or are *repealed by the authority* which enacted them. Now, I maintain that the law of the Sabbath has not been abrogated in either of these ways. It has not expired *by its own limitations*. When Jehovah instituted the Sabbath, he made no provision, expressed or implied, that it should cease after a given period. All that is said about it is, that "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." Here are no limitations. The seventh day was set apart and sanctified as a holy day. The only natural interpretation is, that the Sabbath was intended to be a permanent institution. The absence of any provision, that the observance of the Sabbath should be maintained for a given period and then cease, most conclusively shows that it could not expire by limitation. The unavoidable inference is that it is still in force.

Nor has the law of the Sabbath been *repealed*. The Scriptures contain no account of a repeal. On the contrary, we find that good men, under

the former dispensation, sacredly observed the Sabbath, and that the apostles, under the new, did the same. Christ did not repeal it, for he not only regularly observed the Sabbath himself, but expressly said, "I came not to destroy the law and the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." The subject is therefore specially guarded against the supposition that Christ abrogated the sabbatical law.

This is also still more evident, because the sabbatical law is, in the text, made a constituent part of the *moral law*. God gave to Moses on Sinai a code of moral laws, in distinction from the ceremonial, and incorporated the original law of the Sabbath into that code, as an integral part of the same. The moral law, or the decalogue, is, in its very nature, obligatory on all men in all ages of the world. It is not, like the ceremonial laws of the Jews, adapted to the genius and circumstances of one nation only, but of all nations alike. It was not designed, like the ceremonial laws of that nation, to cease with the existence of that nation, but to be of perpetual obligation on all mankind. If the other nine commandments of the decalogue are, *in their very nature*, obligatory on all men;—if all mankind are bound to have no other gods

before Jehovah—to make and serve no graven images—to abstain from taking the name of God in vain—to honor their parents—to refrain from murder, adultery, theft, bearing false-witness and covetousness, then they are equally bound to “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.”

Again, the fourth commandment occupies a peculiar *place* in the decalogue. The first three commandments prescribe our duties to God—the last six our duties to man. An old writer rather quaintly, but pertinently remarks, “The fourth commandment is put into the *bosom* of the decalogue, that it might not be lost ;—it is the *golden clasp* which joins the two tables together.”

Another circumstance, which strengthens the argument for the perpetuity of the Sabbath, is, that the ten commandments were written by God himself on tables of *stone*. Stone is the emblem of durability. A table of stone, or a pillar of stone, is designed to transmit whatever is engraved on it, down to as late a period as possible. The moral law, (a part of which is the fourth commandment,) was written on tables of stone, thereby indicating the intention of the great Lawgiver to transmit it to the latest ages, as a law binding on all mankind ; while the ceremonial laws, intended for the Jews only, were unwritten—given to Moses

orally. Now, why this distinction in the *mode* of giving these two codes of law, if there was to be no difference in respect of their duration? And why was the fourth commandment written on a tablet of stone, like the other nine, if Jehovah intended to make its obligatory power less permanent than that of the rest? Every interpretation of this fact is unnatural and forced, which does not admit the *perpetual* obligation of the fourth commandment.

This various and ample proof establishes the position, that the Sabbath is a *permanent* institution; binding on us and on all men to the end of the world.

But it may be said, that the Sabbath has been *changed* from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the week, and that this *change of the day* militates against the doctrine of its perpetuity. In reply to this, I would say, that the *day* for the observance of any festival may be changed, without at all affecting the permanency of that festival. The two things are entirely distinct, and rest on independent grounds. But we have the high authority of "the Lord of the Sabbath" and of his apostles, not only for the change of the day, but for the continuance of the Sabbath *after* the change. The Sabbath was instituted to commemorate the

resting from the work of the creation ; and it was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week to commemorate the resurrection of Christ. There was a propriety in the change, arising from the *superior importance* of the latter event.

“ ’Twas great—to speak a world from nought ;
’Twas greater—to REDEEM.”

Christ, by his own example, sanctioned not the change of the day only, but the permanence of the institution itself. On the day of his resurrection, he repeatedly appeared to his disciples, and he met them again the next first day of the week, when they were assembled for religious worship, and said, “ *Peace be unto you.*” Now, why did he so regularly and repeatedly meet them on the first day of the week, unless it was not only to change the day, but to confirm *the existence and perpetuity* of the Sabbath by the highest possible authority ?

The Holy Spirit also added his decisive attestation to the continued and permanent existence of the Sabbath, under the new regulation, by his remarkable operations on the day of Pentecost, which was the Christian Sabbath. The conversion of three thousand souls was a glorious consecration of that day to the great work of saving men.

The practice of the apostles and of the primitive churches, on this subject, conformed to the example and probable instructions of their Master. They regularly observed "the first day of the week" as the Sabbath. On that day, they were accustomed to assemble for public worship, to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and to contribute of their substance to supply the wants of their needy brethren.

Ecclesiastical history informs us that, in the early ages of the Christian church, the first day of the week was observed as the Sabbath. Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Constantine, Theophilus, and others, have left their testimony to the extent and correctness of that practice. The same practice has continued to the present time, and no doubt will continue till the consummation of all things.

Such is a brief view of the proof that the Sabbath is of perpetual obligation, binding alike on all nations and individuals to the end of time.

The way is now prepared to consider,

III. *The manner in which the Sabbath should be observed.* "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it *holy*." In the Scriptures, that is called *holy* which is *set apart*, and *consecrated to the service of God*. Now God has set apart and

sanctified the Sabbath, as a day to be devoted exclusively to his service. A proper observance of the Sabbath, therefore, includes attention to two things ;—the *duties* we are to perform—and the *acts and feelings* from which we are to abstain.

Of the *duties* we are to perform on the Sabbath, the following are the more prominent.

1. *Rest from secular labor.* The word Sabbath means *rest*. It received its meaning from the fact that God *rested* from the work of creation. On the Sabbath, all secular labor is to cease. “In it thou shalt not do *any work*.” The moment the Sabbath begins, there is to be an universal pause of the din and bustle of the week. In all well-regulated, Christian communities, all animate and inanimate things seem to sympathize in the stillness of the Sabbath. The heavens and the earth appear to be unusually placid and serene, and all animated nature to repose in unwonted quietness. Man, too, man, for whom “the Sabbath was made,” should cease from secular labor, and rest in the service of God.

2. *Self-examination, reading the Scriptures and other religious books, and secret prayer* are duties, which, though they are to be attended to on the other days of the week, are to receive special attention on the Sabbath. Indeed, the great

reason for the institution of the Sabbath was, to give us an unmolested opportunity to become experimentally acquainted with our Maker—to cultivate nearness of access to him, and intimate communion with him. The leisure and quietness of the Sabbath afford an excellent opportunity for, and supply powerful motives to deep self-inspection, devout reading and meditation, and near approaches to God on the mercy seat. These high and holy communings with heaven are a most essential part of the duties of the Lord's day. All persons, who cultivate none of this hallowed intercourse with God, do not "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

Many persons would acquire but a little knowledge of the Bible and of divine things, were it not for the leisure afforded them by the Sabbath. Persons employed in manufactories, day laborers and domestics, often cannot devote as much time during the secular days of the week to religious improvement, as their cases demand; but the Sabbath comes to their relief, and spreads out before them the ample page of divine knowledge. Employ, then, this holy day in obtaining that knowledge of yourselves and of God, which will prepare you for the companionship of the seraphim.

3. *Family instruction* is an important branch of

the duties of the Sabbath. The man of a thousand cares can now retire to the bosom of his family, and spend holy time in imparting instruction to his children and domestics. The family are now together. The parents are the natural instructors of the circle, and all the group look up to them for counsel and example. What a favorable opportunity to exert good influence! What an amount of religious knowledge may parents impart in the lapse of a few years! How many gems may they add to the brilliant crown of the Redeemer, by fidelity to the souls of their households! If they are unfaithful, they will have an account to render at the judgment, which will fill them with consternation.

4. *Public worship* claims your special attention on the Sabbath. Public worship is fitted to the nature of man as a social being. In all ages of the church, it has been sustained. The Jews had their holy convocations on the Sabbath. Often did they chant the high praises of God in the words of the psalmist, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of

wickedness. I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."

The Bible tells us that it was the "*custom*" of Jesus Christ, when on the earth, to attend public worship in the synagogue. The apostles used to meet with their converts, and worship God on the Sabbath. They commanded men not to "forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some" was even at that early period. Good men, in all ages, have loved the sanctuary. Here, "the rich and the poor meet together." Here, they are made, in some measure, to feel, that

"All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite *cutaneous*,"

and that they will all be forgotten in the great and endless distinction between the righteous and the wicked in heaven and hell.

Who can estimate the influence of the sanctuary on the intelligence, the morals, and the religion of the world. The oft-repeated lines of Cowper have lost none of their truth ;—

"The pulpit,
I say the pulpit, in the sober use
Of its legitimate peculiar powers,
Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,
The most important and effectual guard,
Support and ornament of virtue's cause."

Regularly attend, then, my young friends, the public worship of God. Sanctify the Sabbath by resorting to his house "with the multitude which keep holy day," and by offering the homage of humble, contrite hearts.

But a proper observance of the Sabbath requires us to *abstain from certain acts and feelings*, as well as to perform the above-mentioned duties. In order to ascertain what things are *prohibited* on the Sabbath, we must examine somewhat more closely the fourth commandment, and our Saviour's expositions of it. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it, thou shalt not do *any work*, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Here, all heads of families are expressly forbidden to do "*any work*," and the prohibition extends to their sons and daughters, their men servants and maid servants, their cattle, and the strangers whom they happen to entertain. The prohibition is positive and absolute, "Thou shalt not do *any work*;" and, under the Mosaic economy, the least violation of this rule was punished with death. In process of time, the Jews engrafted many of their tradi-

tions on this law, and accounted it improper to repel force by force, to use oil medicinally, or to heal the sick on the Sabbath day. To show that these traditional constructions of the law, forbidding us to "*do any work*," were incorrect, Christ himself expounded its meaning. Let us look at his exposition.

On a certain Sabbath, he found a woman in a synagogue, who had been severely afflicted with disease eighteen years, and he healed her. The ruler of the synagogue was indignant, and said to the people ;—"There are six days in which men ought to work : in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Our Lord, knowing that the rebuke was intended for himself, answered, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath day, loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering ; and ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day ? And all his adversaries were ashamed."

At another time, Jesus, going to the synagogue on the Sabbath, "went through the corn, and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat." The Pharisees

charged them with breaking the Sabbath. But our Lord fully justified them on the ground of the *urgent necessity* of the case. It was to *save life*. The same day, he found in the synagogue "a man whose hand was withered." The Jews, with their usual captiousness, asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And he said unto them, what man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much, then, is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days."

These expositions are all which Christ thought necessary to give of the clause, "Thou shalt *not do any work*." Now, let it be distinctly remembered, that, in all these cases, no work is allowed, but works of *mercy only*. It is a work of *mercy* to relieve an ox or a sheep from present suffering, to deliver men and women from present severe bodily infirmities, and to appease present hunger. And in all these cases, it was a work, which could not be postponed till Monday without *endangering life*. They were then *necessary works of mercy*.*

* For some of the thoughts in this lecture, the author gratefully acknowledges his obligation to a Treatise on the Sabbath by Rev. Dr. Humphrey, of Amherst college ;—a work, which deserves a far more extensive circulation.

The phrase, "*necessary works of mercy*," is intelligible, describes more accurately the only exception to the fourth commandment, and is less liable to abuse, than that used by the Westminster Assembly of divines;—namely, "works of necessity and mercy." There are many sorts of business, which some would call "*works of necessity*," but which are not *necessary works of mercy*, and therefore they are forbidden by the fourth commandment.

Here, then, is the test, to which we are to bring all our conduct on the Sabbath. The commandment is, "Thou shalt not do *any work*;" and the only exception, authorized by the great Expounder of the law, is—those works, which are clearly *necessary works of mercy*. None others, under any circumstances, are allowed.

Let us subject some of the practices of society to this decisive test.

Here is a farmer, who has a field of grain, which for sometime has been ready for the sickle, but in consequence of continued rains, he has been unable to harvest it. And, to make the case as strong as possible, we will suppose him to be a poor man, and that his family are quite dependent on this grain for their bread. The first fair day is the Sabbath. The grain has already begun to

sprout in the ear. Monday it may rain again. Now, the question is, does our Saviour's exposition of the fourth commandment allow him, even in this extreme case, to go and gather his grain on the Sabbath? The case turns on the point, Is it a *necessary work of MERCY*? Is it *present* suffering which is to be relieved? No. His family are all in health. They have at present a supply for their wants. They are in no immediate danger of starvation. The case then does not come within the exception. He ought not to gather his grain on the Sabbath day. He ought to obey God, and leave the result with him. His command is, "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest; *in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.*" "Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed."

But he may reply to this, and say, "I expended much labor in preparing that field for a crop. God has blessed the work of my hands, and brought my crop to maturity; and now, does he not design that I shall gather it on the Sabbath, rather than lose it entirely?" My answer is, that this reasoning does not invalidate the rule, "Thou shalt not do any work." The law is to be obeyed. And besides, it is not certain that God intended he should enjoy the crop, because it is brought to

maturity. Often has he blessed the labors of the husbandman, and caused his crops to ripen, and given him a favorable opportunity for harvest, and then sent the lightnings of heaven and consumed the whole, after it was deposited in the barn. It is the duty of every one to obey God, and leave all consequences to his disposal.

“But,” says another, “I keep a livery stable. Myself and family are dependent on that business for support. I can let more horses and carriages on the Sabbath than on any other day of the week, and I cannot sustain myself if I do not let them on the Sabbath. Is it not right for me to continue the business?” The answer turns again on the point, whether it is a *necessary work of mercy* to let his horses and carriages on the Sabbath. It is his duty to let them to physicians, who have no other means of conveyance to visit their patients, and to other persons, whose absent friends are sick and are in pressing need of their assistance. These, and similar cases, come within the exception. But to let them to all persons indiscriminately, for purposes of recreation or gain, is a palpable violation of the Lord’s day.

“But,” says the man, “I am not in the habit of inquiring after other people’s business. I do not know whether their friends are sick, or in

health. I am applied to for means of conveyance, and may I not in all cases furnish them?" Jesus Christ, by his recorded expositions of the law, has settled the point. You have the means, or you may have them without any impertinent inquisitiveness, of knowing whether you let them for purposes of pleasure or profit, or for those which the "Lord of the Sabbath" approves. You are therefore bound to discriminate, and never to furnish the means of conveyance to persons, who you *know* will employ them in violating the Sabbath.

The same rule applies to the *hiring* as to the letting of means of conveyance. No man has a right to hire them, or to use his own on the Sabbath, except it be to perform a *necessary work of mercy*—a work of mercy, which cannot be postponed to another day. What an amount of guilt, then, attaches to the multitude in our large cities, and towns, and villages, who charter hundreds and thousands of conveyances by land and water, and drive over and trample under foot the Sabbaths of Him, who has commanded us all to remember them and keep them holy!

Take another case. In a large manufacturing establishment, it happens, that, just at sunset on Saturday, a principal wheel in the machinery

breaks, and it will take five men a whole day to repair it. A hundred, or perhaps two hundred persons cannot proceed with their business till the repair is made. Now, the question is, must this repair be made on the Sabbath, or must it be deferred till Monday, and the numerous operatives lie still, on expense, a whole day? Bring the case to the test of the principle established by our Lord, and what is the decision? Is it a *necessary work of mercy* to make the repair on the Sabbath? Whose life or health will be placed in jeopardy by the delay of one day? Nobody's. It is then a mere question of property—of profit or loss. If five machinists may on the Sabbath repair the broken wheel, on the same principle, the farmer and the mechanic may repair their tools, and other trades ply their respective occupations. The difference in the magnitude of the concern, in the one case and in the other, makes no difference in the *principle* involved. It is still a mere question of *property*, and therefore the propriety of the repair is not admitted by our Lord's construction of the fourth commandment.

Suppose another case. In this manufacturing establishment, there are some hundreds of persons, who are almost incessantly occupied with business during the week, and, on the Sabbath, a strong

temptation is presented to spend a part of the day, at least, in walking the fields and streets, or in riding into the surrounding country. Now, does their confinement during the week give them a dispensation from the duty of remembering "the Sabbath day to keep it holy?" Not at all. Spending the day, or any part of it, in mere recreation, is positively forbidden. To spend it so, is to incur the wrath of Heaven.

But here is a young man, who wishes to go and see his friends, some ten or twenty miles distant, and he can save the wages of a whole day, by visiting them on the Sabbath. Has he not a right to go? No. It is not a necessary work of *mercy*. His friends are in health, or, at least, he knows nothing to the contrary. His object is merely the *gratification*, which a visit to his friends would afford. His duty therefore is plain. He must forego the gratification of a visit, and keep the Sabbath holy.

There are many other usages of society which fall under the condemnation of the fourth commandment, which I have not time to notice at large. Among them may be mentioned the transportation of the mail on the Sabbath, the opening of post-offices, the delivery of letters, the posting of books, the loading and sailing of vessels, the

reading of political newspapers and literary periodicals, and the selling and drinking of ardent spirits.

Finally, it is to be particularly remembered, that a proper observance of the Sabbath requires not only the practice of the duties, and the avoidance of the sins mentioned in this lecture, but abstinence from *all worldly, unholy feelings and thoughts*. God looketh on the *heart*. All religious duties may be externally performed, and yet the Sabbath is violated, unless the heart be right. A renewed, a holy heart is indispensable to a real compliance with the requisitions of the fourth commandment.

My youthful hearers, viewing the conduct of many of our fellow citizens in the light of this commandment as explained by our Lord, it is not to be denied, that the Sabbath is violated to an alarming extent. And there is much reason to fear, that this evil is increasing with the prosperity of the country. The rapid growth of our cities and villages—the increase of luxury and wealth—the multiplication of canals, and steam-boats, and rail-ways—the impatience of restraint—and the laxness of many professed observers of the Sabbath, all, *all* contribute to roll the tide of desecration over that holy day. The whole land groans

under this abomination. And if God is strict to mark iniquity—if he sent his chosen people into a seventy years' captivity because they would not keep the Sabbath, how much have we, as a nation, to fear! Nothing but timely repentance and reformation can avert his fierce anger. O, let the young men of our land lay this subject to heart. They can do much to increase, and much to prevent the profanation of the Sabbath. This generation of youth have the question to decide, whether the Sabbath shall be a day of amusement and business, or whether it shall be devoted to its proper objects. The responsibility on them is tremendous. Save the Sabbath, then, from desecration. Give it the whole weight of your influence. Remember that the day, which shall witness an universal prostration of the Sabbath, will shine, though with dimmed lustre, on the cemetery of our republican and Christian institutions and of the hopes of the world.

LECTURE VI.

MORALITY NECESSARY, BUT INSUFFICIENT TO SALVATION.

MATT. XIX. 16—22.—And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life: And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

IN all enlightened, well-regulated communities, morality is held to be essential to the highest prosperity of man. Its praises are on every tongue. It has been often recommended in the most splendid creations of the poet's fancy, by the didactic instructions of the theologian, and from the chair of the professed teacher of moral science. And yet, in common discourse, morality is a term

of very indefinite signification. Customs and practices, which some think are conformable to the rules of morality, others deem to be palpable violations of the same. This arises from the fact, that men appeal to no common standard, to determine the moral quality of actions. Though there is a standard of appeal, which is safe and decisive, most men seem to be unwilling to bring their conduct to so high and holy a test. They are afraid of the consequences. They anticipate an unfavorable decision.

But such is the homage which vice pays to virtue, that men are anxious to keep themselves in countenance while they are living, if the Bible be admitted to judge, in habits of fearful delinquency. Hence, rules of life and manners are created, in different communities, by public opinion, or, more properly speaking, by the prevailing *taste* of those communities. These rules are purely conventional; and, formed under these circumstances, they are, almost of necessity, more lax and accommodating than those contained in the Scriptures of truth. It was in this way, that theft came to be considered a virtue by the Spartans, provided it was not discovered; and that war was regarded by the martial Romans, as not only proper, but, in the highest degree, honorable.

Hence it is, too, that the laws of chastity are so commonly violated in France, and that duelling is so frequently practiced in some parts of the United States. According to these lax rules of judgment, what is right in one country is wrong in another—what is honorable on one parallel of latitude, may be dishonorable on the next. “Mountains interposed” determine the quality of actions, and pronounce the same actions, on the one side, *wrong*; and, on the other side, *right*.

It is evident, therefore, that, apart from the Bible, the moral quality of actions can never be determined. If the Bible be not the standard, men have *no* standard. But, all believers in divine revelation admit the Bible to be the standard, by which all actions are to be tried. They hold it to be an authoritative, infallible standard, and one from which there lies no appeal.

The young man, whose history is given us in the text, sustained a character, according to the judgment of this world, of the most irreproachable morality. So far as his outward conduct was concerned, he had kept all the commandments from his youth up. But when Jesus, to test the soundness of his morality by the rules of the Scriptures, told him to go and sell all that he had and give it to the poor—to make an entire and un-

conditional surrender of the world, as the indispensable condition of discipleship and of admission into heaven, he could not abide the trial;—"he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

The history of this young man is substantially that of many other youth. It is proposed to consider the subject, suggested by his history, in its application to the young people of this village; a village, which, after making all reasonable deductions on the score of local predilection, must be admitted to hold, at least, as high a place on the scale of morals, as other villages equally populous.

The general sentiment taught by the text is, that *strict morality is indispensable, but insufficient to salvation.*

The two parts of this proposition will be considered separately.

I. Strict morality is *indispensable* to salvation.

The term *morality* is here used in the popular acceptation—meaning just what it imports in common usage. Some men, in their zeal to enforce the scriptural doctrine of salvation by grace alone, have, by implication, communicated the idea, that sound morals have but little connection with our preparation for heaven. This idea, however, is

wholly at variance with the preparation demanded, Admitting, what is truly the fact, that vital piety is the grand requisite for entrance into life, it by no means follows, that strict morality is unnecessary or unimportant. Though the greater be indispensable, the lesser may be equally so. Morality, in one sense, may be said to sustain very much the same relation to religion, which a part does to the whole;—and surely, if the *whole* be demanded, its *parts*, of course, are required. It is altogether a delusive and dangerous impression, that a man can give credible evidence of piety, while his morals are questionable. What evidence of personal holiness can he give, if he is seriously deficient in sobriety, or honesty, or integrity, or benevolence? How can he substantiate his title to heaven, if he exhibits habitual defects in the social and mercantile virtues? His pretensions to piety rest on a slender basis indeed, if they are not accredited by a life of consistent morality.

Antinomianism is as far removed from religion on the one hand, as Arminianism is on the other. While mere morality is utterly inadequate to save the soul, good works are indispensable as the fruit and evidence of religion in the heart. “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save

him?" "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Thus emphatically do the inspired writers pronounce all religious hopes to be vain, if they are not supported by a life of strict morality. But

II. The strictest morality of the world is entirely *insufficient* to salvation. That it is *sufficient*, is a very prevalent error; and dangerous, just in proportion to its prevalence. This branch of the subject, therefore, requires to be treated more at large. Some of the usages of society, on which great reliance for salvation is frequently placed, will be put to the test of the Scriptures, as that is the only standard of appeal.

The scriptural rule of morality is summarily announced in these two declarations;—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." As this rule of morality applies to a

great variety of subjects and relations, I can, in this lecture, show its application to only a few of them.

1. Strict morality forbids us to injure others by *violating their right of property*. That right may be violated in three ways;—by *theft, robbery, and fraud*. *Theft* is the taking of the property of others *without their knowledge*. But few instances of theft on a large scale occur. There is, in such cases, more danger of detection, and this operates as a powerful preventive of theft. Most of the thefts, which are committed, consist in pilfering or purloining articles of small value. There are probably more immoralities of this sort than are commonly imagined, even in communities which claim to be honest. Clerks, apprentices and domestics frequently handle the property of others, and are under strong temptations to this species of dishonesty. Nor is the moral character of the most petty theft altered, by persuading ourselves that the owner will never know it, or that he will not care about it, or that he would have no objection, or that he can afford to lose the property. None of these excuses palliate, in the slightest degree, the heinousness of the offence. I put it to the consciences of the young, and ask, whether any of you are guilty of such violations

of the command, "Thou shalt not steal." If you are, "be sure your sin will find you out." Your offences were committed not merely against the injured individuals, but against society, against conscience, against the moral law, against God; and all are interested in bringing them to light. Escape, therefore, is impossible.

Robbery is the taking of the property of another, with his consent *compulsorily obtained*. The highwayman meets a traveller, and threatens him with instant death, unless he surrenders his money. Here, consent is obtained, but obtained at the point of the bayonet, or the mouth of the pistol. This is a high-handed offence against society, and, under most governments, is capitally punished. As this offence is comparatively infrequent, as it is committed only by the most hardened desperadoes, and, as it should seem, they cannot hope for salvation on the ground of their morality, it is unnecessary to dwell on it at length.

The rule of morality, respecting the property of others, is much more frequently violated by *fraud*. Fraud is not so tangible a thing as theft or robbery, it can be practiced in a greater variety of forms, and is not so easily exposed. Hence, the frequency of this species of immorality.

A man is guilty of fraud, when he sells *an in-*

ferior article at the market price of good ones. This is done by artfully magnifying the value of the article. The seller knows that it is not as good as the average quality of such articles. Rather than sell it at its fair value, he tries various methods to make the buyer think it as good as articles of that kind will average; and if he succeeds in disposing of it above its *actual* value, he commits fraud upon the property of his neighbor; that is, he knowingly receives from him more than an equivalent for the article sold.

Now, I ask, is not this species of fraud frequently practiced, and practiced too without compunction, by men who hold a respectable standing in society, and who would highly resent it if they should be called immoral? Such conduct may be connived at by the lax maxims of society, but it is pointedly condemned by the golden rule,—“Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.” This law of reciprocity between man and man exposes the deep iniquity of such transactions, however customary they may be in the high places of this world’s respectability.

A man is also guilty of fraud, who sells any article *above the market price*. It is the common understanding of mankind, that the market price

is the rule which determines the worth of an article. Every seller takes pains to create the expectation, that he will sell at the market price. He would consider it an impeachment of his character, were it asserted, that he is unwilling to sell at that price. All this shows, that it is morally right to sell at the market price, and at no higher one. He, then, is guilty of fraud, who sells above that price. Nor can the fraudulent character of the sale be altered, by saying that there is no market price, or that every man is bound to look out for himself, or that the purchaser was not obliged to buy. The guilt of fraud is upon the seller, because he was anxious to have it understood, that it is his rule to sell at the market price, and because he refused to fulfill an expectation which he created.

A man deals fraudulently, who induces others to purchase by appealing to their *hopes*, *fears* or *avarice*. "This rule is violated when, in dealings on the exchange, false information is circulated for the purpose of raising or depressing the price of stocks. It is violated by speculators, who monopolize an article to create a scarcity, and thus raise the price while the supply is abundant. The case is the same when a salesman looks upon a stranger who enters his store, and deliberately calculates

how he shall best influence, and excite, and mislead his mind, so as to sell the greatest amount of goods at the most exorbitant profit." *

Again, a man is guilty of fraud, who *conceals any defect, fault or blemish* in an article which he sells. When any article is offered for sale, the presumption is that it is sound, or free from defects. This is always the presumption, unless it is known, that the seller does not guaranty its soundness. Whenever, therefore, an article is sold, under an expressed or implied guaranty that it is perfect, and, at the same time, the seller knows and conceals any defect in it, he is manifestly guilty of fraud. How often are horses and cattle sold when their defects are carefully concealed; and wines and liquors adulterated and sold as genuine; and legal weight and measure curtailed. These, and many similar frauds are practiced to a wide and fearful extent, and practiced too by men, who claim to be strictly honest. But, tested by the moral law, these practices are found to be egregiously sinful. Is not *such* morality utterly insufficient to save the soul?

But these remarks, which have been made re-

* Wayland's Elements of Moral Science; a work, from which a few of the principles in this part of the lecture are taken.

specting the seller, are equally applicable to the buyer. Both parties are equally bound, by the law of reciprocity, to the strictest integrity in their pecuniary transactions. If the buyer uses any unfair means to obtain an article for less than its real value—if he is unwilling to give the market price, he is clearly guilty of fraudulent dealing. He does not give an equivalent for the article purchased. The law of morality lays under deep condemnation the whole business, however common it may be, of *depreciating* articles which we wish to purchase, of *beating down* and *cheapening* their price. Such are the customs of society, that, nearly every man, who has anything to sell, has a number of prices for his article, and the buyer deems it right to cheapen it to the lowest possible point. All this is done every day by men who profess to be moral, and who are hoping, on the strength of their morality, to enter the kingdom of God.

The iniquity of these modes of dealing, with respect to either the buyer or the seller, is not, in the slightest degree, mitigated, by saying that these customs are universal, that they enter into the very framework and texture of society, that no business can be conducted without them, that every body expects to deal in these ways, and

that we cannot support our families, if we must relinquish such methods of making a good bargain. The question, in all such cases, is, not what is *politic* according to the corrupt maxims of society, but what is *morally right*. In all ethical inquiries, the point to be ascertained is, what is *right*; and not what, in a pecuniary sense, is advantageous. With respect to the customs adverted to, it is most manifest, that the stamp of Jehovah's disapprobation is imprinted on them all. Such morality is therefore utterly inadequate to save the soul.

In the twenty-third chapter of Genesis, is an account of Abraham's purchase of the field of Machpelah, of Ephron the Hittite. In the whole history of pecuniary transactions, perhaps there cannot be found a finer example of genuine politeness—of noble generosity—of uncorrupted simplicity—and of unimpeachable integrity than both parties exhibited in that trade. I would earnestly recommend the frequent perusal of the account of that most honorable negotiation, as an antidote to the low cunning, and over-reaching, and chicanery of this trafficking age.

2. The moral law forbids us to injure the *reputation* of others. This rule is violated by *unnecessarily giving publicity* to their bad actions. If I know that my neighbor has acted dishonestly, I

am not therefore at liberty to speak of it, unless the law of benevolence to individuals or to society requires it. Many seem to desire to possess a knowledge of all the bad actions of others, and to report them without the least reserve. They never seem so much in their element, as when they are industriously engaged in collecting and spreading such intelligence. Whether this disposition arises from a desire to gratify the malice of the heart, or to be thought to possess greater knowledge or greater virtue than others, it is manifestly evil—it is a flagrant violation of the law—“Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.” Few sins are more common or more injurious than slander. “The words of a tale-bearer are as wounds.” “Where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth.” Mark Antony, it has been said, tamed lions, and drove them harnessed to his chariot through the streets of Rome. Had he tamed his own *tongue*, it had been a greater wonder still. “But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. It is a fire, a world of iniquity, it setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.” Can it be possible that persons, who are habitually given to slander, are fair candidates for heaven? Certainly not.

The law of morality also forbids us to draw *general conclusions* respecting the characters of others from *individual bad actions*. A single act is rarely decisive of character. A single act of illiberality does not prove a man to be covetous. A single act of unkindness does not prove a man a monster. "How unjust, then, must it be, to proclaim a man as destitute of a whole class of virtues, because of one failure in virtue. How much more unjust, for one fault, to deny him all claim to any virtue whatsoever." *

Again, this law is violated by imputing *bad motives* to the actions of men. In some cases, the nature of the action is such, that to presume a good motive is impossible. But the rule requires us always to presume a good motive where the action is susceptible of one, and to assign no other motive than that from which it professes to proceed. And yet, how often does the malignity of the heart show itself, by indiscriminately imputing bad motives to all the wrong actions of men, and even by persisting in imputing such motives, after they have been disclaimed. You do not wish others to impute unworthy motives to you, and "whatsoever ye would that men

* Elements of Moral Science.

should do unto you, do ye even so to them ; for this is the law and the prophets."

Applying the principles of the moral law to the conversation of mankind, we see that no small part of it is laid under the ban of its terrible condemnation. No man, who is habitually guilty of the practices above-mentioned, can safely regard himself as a candidate for heaven.

3. The moral law requires of us *veracity*, or a *strict regard to truth*. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." "Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord." "All liars shall have their part in the lake, that burns with fire and brimstone."

The law of veracity is therefore violated when *we utter as truth, what we know to be false*. This is the boldest form in which the law of veracity is broken, and yet it is often exhibited by men, who would highly resent it, if they were told that their word cannot be depended on, and who are trusting in their morality for eternal life. To save their reputation, or to make money, they will unblushingly tell the most deliberate falsehoods. They will positively assert that to be true, which they know to be false, in the hope of relieving themselves of some foul imputation, or of disposing of some article, which they are anxious to sell, or

of obtaining one, which they very much want. The simple statement of this practice is sufficient to show its odiousness in the sight of a holy God, and to demonstrate the entire unsoundness of that man's hopes, who, while he is guilty of it, is reckoning on his moral life as the ground of his admission into heaven.

Another frequent breach of the law of veracity consists in uttering the truth in *such a way, as conveys a false impression*. This is done by exaggerating, or by extenuating the facts in the case. Doubtless this is not unfrequently done in courts of justice. Under all the solemnities of an oath, such a gloss or coloring is sometimes given to the facts in the case, as conveys a false impression to the minds of the court and jury. In common conversation too, facts are often stated in such a hyperbolical way, that incorrect impressions are frequently communicated. This is a very customary mode of speech; and yet it contains most of the elements and guilt of more open falsehood, for no man knows exactly how many grains of allowance to make to the habit of dealing in hyperbole, and, of course, his mind may be very injuriously influenced. The law of veracity requires, in all cases, the most simple, upright, unvarnished statement of facts. The customs, just adverted to, are evi-

dent violations of this law, and, in the sight of God, are stamped with deeper iniquity than is generally imagined. Habitual indulgence in them must prejudice every title to heaven.

4. The scriptural rule of morality requires the *strictest chastity*. There are certain offences against the law of chastity, which, though they are not unfrequently practiced and connived at, are nevertheless real violations of the seventh commandment. Of this description, is the indulgence of impure imaginations. Jesus Christ, the Great Expounder of the moral law, has decided, that "whosoever *looketh* on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." An impure *look* is therefore a gross violation of the divine law, and, unrepented of, will prevent the salvation of the mental adulterer.

Of the same description, are all indulgencies in lascivious conversation—the reading of obscene books—self-pollution—and the tempting of others to lewdness. I refrain from pursuing this topic further, and leave it to every person's conscience to decide, to what extent he is guilty of violating the law of chastity. Let every youth tremble, lest, at the great day of trial, he be found guilty of sins, of which "it is a shame even to speak;" and be consigned, with the multitude of the

polluted, "to shame and everlasting contempt." "Blessed are the *pure in heart*, for they," and they only, "shall see God."

5. The scriptural law of morality requires the *strictest temperance*. Such is the intoxicating and poisonous nature of all alcoholic mixtures, as proved by chemical analysis and experience, that any use of them whatever, as a beverage, is now known to be highly injurious to the bodies and the souls of men. The importation, manufacture, vending and drinking of intoxicating liquors have, after the most mature examination, been pronounced to be *immoralities* by nearly all the temperance societies throughout Christendom, by a large and most respectable part of the medical faculty, and by numerous ecclesiastical bodies of various religious denominations in different and distant parts of the world. This decision of enlightened and widely extended public sentiment is sustained and corroborated by the word of God. It must therefore be regarded as immoral for any man, with all this light on the subject, to continue any longer in the importation, manufacture, sale or consumption of alcoholic liquors as a drink. The immediate relinquishment of these several employments is imperatively demanded by the law of morality. Continuance in them, after they

are *known* to be of immoral tendency, is heinously sinful. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." If, therefore, it be immoral to continue, in any of these ways, to promote intemperance, and if strict morality is an indispensable prerequisite to entrance upon the perfect purity of the celestial state, in what a fearful position are all importers, manufacturers, vendors and drinkers of intoxicating liquors placed ! Who would be willing to put his soul in their soul's stead ? Who is willing to take the risk they are incurring, of drinking forever "the wine of the fierceness of the wrath" of Almighty God, "poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ?"

Such are some of the offences against the law of God, of which multitudes are guilty, who claim to lead a life of irreproachable morality, and who regard such a life as a sure passport to heaven. It is overwhelming to think, on what precarious grounds they are building their immortal hopes. From the slight examination which has now been given of the subject, it is palpable as the sun in heaven, that the strictest morality of the world is utterly insufficient to save men. There are three reasons why it is insufficient.

1. It is deficient *in extent*. The reason why

many suppose themselves to be strictly moral is, because they measure themselves by some other standard than the law of God. That law takes cognizance of the heart, as well as of the outward act; and, according to its irreversible decision, every impure *look* is adultery, and every emotion of *anger* towards our fellow men is murder. Now, can the most self-complacent moralist lay his hand on his heart and say, that he never entertained *one* impure or angry feeling? This, no man can say with truth. If not, his morality, as the ground of his justification, is worthless in the sight of a holy God. He that offends in but *one* point, is guilty of all. One breach of the law shows as conclusively the principle of contempt in the heart, aims as deadly a blow at the authority of the Lawgiver, and is as utterly irremediable by the offender, as a thousand offences. The best morality of the worldling is therefore utterly defective in extent. It is not a compliance with *all* the obligations imposed by the moral law.

But this is not the worst view of the case. As a matter of fact, he stands guilty, not merely of one violation of the law, nor even of a few—but of more violations of it than there are hairs on his head, or stars in the canopy of night. Nor is this mere conjecture or assertion; but according to the

Bible, it is plain, palpable, undeniable truth. "Who then can be saved?" Not one, on the ground of perfect compliance with the law of God. Probably the young man, whose history is the basis of this lecture, was as scrupulously moral as any of you can claim to be, and yet he went away from Jesus sorrowful, when the deficiencies of his morality were exposed. You, too, may belong to the "straitest sect" of mere moralists—your character in the estimation of the world, may be unimpeachable, while, in the estimate of the law of God, you are deeply defective and corrupt. That law addresses each of you, who is depending on his morality for salvation, in these searching terms—"One thing thou lackest;"—"TEKEL, thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

2. Mere worldly morality is defective *in principle*. Inadequate as it is in degree, it is much more seriously defective in motive. It is supremely selfish. Unexceptionable as your conduct often is, its supposed justificative power may be entirely vitiated by the impurity of the motive from which it springs. Let me illustrate this point by an example.

A merchant in New York or Boston, invests all and more than all his property in certain articles of merchandise, sends them to the East Indies,

and consigns them to the care of an agent or factor whom he has never seen, and who is actuated by the principles which generally regulate commercial intercourse. That agent exchanges the articles for such as the merchant ordered, the return cargo arrives in safety, and the merchant finds that he has made fifty thousand dollars by the voyage. And all because that factor was an honest man; and though the merchant had never seen him, and though the diameter of the globe was between them, yet he dealt fairly and uprightly by the consigner. Now, the point is, why was he honest? He may have been honest from a holy regard to the law of God; or, he may have been honest from a natural regard to what is honorable in commercial transactions; or, he may have been honest from the mere force of education; or, he may have been honest from a direct regard to his own interest. If he had been dishonest, it would have injured his character, and the consequence would be, that merchants will cease to consign goods to his care, his business will thus leave him, and he will be ruined. All the motives to integrity above-mentioned, except the first, may operate, and often do operate in men who blaspheme the name, or even deny the very existence of God. Now, if the integrity of the

factor flowed from any other motive than a supreme regard to the divine law, it was utterly unsound in principle.

Much of the morality we see around us every day is equally defective. Some are honest ; others are restrained from licentious practices ; a third class abandon the use of ardent spirits ; a fourth relinquish profane swearing ; a fifth the habit of gambling ; and a sixth, Sabbath-breaking, through the influence of these vicious motives. The leaven of selfishness impregnates and vitiates them all. Indeed, there is nothing which is virtuous but may be performed, and very often is performed under the influence of no higher, purer motive than a mere regard to one's own interest. This is the fountain-head, from which issue all the streams of worldly morality. Such morality is therefore totally unsound in principle ; and all, who at death rely upon it for salvation, will find that they have built on the sand, and tremendous will be the destruction of their hopes.

3. The strictest morality of the world is insufficient to save, because it does not amount to a *change of the heart*. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The morality of the young man in the gospel was, according to the judgment of this world, without a

blemish; but "except your righteousness *exceed* the righteousness" of that amiable, upright youth, "you can, in no case, enter into the kingdom of heaven." Moral as he was, he was not regenerate; and, rather than transfer his supreme affections from his possessions to Christ, "he went away sorrowful" and we hear of him no more.

Your morals, too, may be much purer than the average morality which exists around you; you may be amiable, and temperate, and veracious—you may be punctual in meeting your pecuniary engagements—you may be upright in buying and selling—you may possess, in a very high degree, the mercantile virtues—and your "eye, even turned on empty space, may beam keen with honor;" and yet you need something more, you need much more, you need a renovation of the heart. Youth and others, whose moral habits are generally correct, are extremely prone to depend on them for salvation; but never was dependence more misplaced or more dangerous. You would not think of erecting a dwelling-house for yourself on the waves of the Atlantic, but such folly would be wisdom, compared with building a hope of heaven on your moral life. This is the danger to which you are pre-eminently exposed. You may deem yourselves quite safe, because your general charac-

ter for morals so often receives the meed of praise. I shall be the last to call in question the correctness of your habits according to the common judgment of mankind, but fidelity to your immortal interests requires me to say, that, according to the law of God, you all stand guilty of soul-destroying immoralities. Your vaunted morals are seriously deficient in extent, defective in principle, and inadequate as a substitute for a renovation of the heart. There is within you hostility to God, which the most beautiful exterior can never hide from his sight—which no self-flattery can charm into love—and which can never be satisfied while he is on the throne. That hostility must be annihilated by the Holy Spirit, and repented of by yourselves, or your salvation is hopeless.

My young friends, let your whole solicitude be concentrated on this point. You probably have serious moments, when your hopes, built on your fancied goodness, totter, like the most stable edifices by the rockings of an earthquake. You shudder, as if the bottomless pit were opening her mouth to receive you. Yield yourselves up to the influence of such impressions. Feel your need of an entire transformation of your moral temper. You are guilty. You need an Almighty Saviour. You need to be washed in his blood. You need a

heart of supreme attachment to his person and his cause.

“Talk they of morals? O thou Bleeding Love,
Thou maker of new morals to mankind,
The grand morality is LOVE OF THEE.”

LECTURE VII.

PERSONAL PIETY.

PROVERBS XXIII. 26.—My son, give me thy heart.

IN the last lecture, it was, I trust, conclusively shown, that the strictest morality of the world is insufficient to salvation. The conclusion to which we were then conducted was, that an entire renovation of the heart is an indispensable prerequisite to entrance into life. The vast importance of this last topic demands your most serious consideration. Wisdom, personating the Lord Jesus Christ, presents it distinctly before you all as individuals ;—“ My son, give me thy heart.”

It is a matter of devout satisfaction, that I address not a few, who have already “ given their hearts ” to the Redeemer. Their views of themselves, of God, of his government, his law, his gospel, and of “ the chief end of man ” are so altered as to prove, that the “ eyes of their under-

standings" have been "enlightened," and that they are "renewed in the spirit of their minds." All I have, at present, to say to this class of youth is ;—Resolve to make the highest possible attainment in piety. Do all you can to bring others to an experimental acquaintance with Jesus Christ. Be faithful unto death, and you will receive crowns of life.

This lecture will be addressed more particularly to those youth, who have not yet complied with the injunction of wisdom, and who have never contemplated the subject of practical piety but at a distance, and in the "dry light" of worldly prosperity.

In soliciting your attention to the subject of *personal, vital religion*, we are met at the outset by certain obstacles, which, I fear, will defeat all efforts to bring it near your hearts. It is a subject, of which multitudes *have no definite conceptions*. All the idea they have of religion is, that it is something external, or something speculative. To talk about the life of God in the soul, to describe the emotions of experimental piety, is to use language which is quite unmeaning. As it regards conveying any definite conceptions to their minds, we may nearly as well speak in an "unknowing tongue." Language, in this case, is not a vehicle of thought.

Before we enter upon the general subject before us, it may be well, therefore, to point out the main *obstacles* to a clear understanding of it. If we cannot convey to the minds of the benighted and ruined, a clear idea of their disease and of its remedy, we may perhaps convince them that they *are* diseased. If we cannot “pour eyesight” on their eyes, it is possible that we may convince them that they are blind.

1. One obstacle, which prevents the sinner from perceiving the nature and importance of personal piety, is *an habitual reliance on his morality*. The moral youth trusts in his amiable temper, his kind, sympathetic, generous disposition, and in his freedom from open vice, and then asks, “Is not this religion?” His eye has been so long placed on these praiseworthy qualities, and they have become so magnified by habitual contemplation, that it is impossible by human strength to divert his attention from them as a ground of hope. This is the only basis on which he is accustomed to rest. To dislodge him from this position, would be to wreck all his hopes of heaven, and leave him—he knows not where. Tell him that religion consists in loving and in serving God, and such is his want of sight that he supposes he has been doing this all his life. Try to explain to

him what it is to love God, but it is all unintelligible. Put in requisition all human ingenuity and skill to convey to his mind the simple idea of holiness of heart, but he obtains no distinct view of anything beyond an irreproachable morality. He reverts to that as invariably as the needle points to the pole. But

2. The principal impediment to a clear understanding of the nature of experimental religion, is an *obtuseness of the moral perceptions*. "Light has come into the world, but men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." There is a difficulty, then, in understanding the nature of vital piety, arising from the blinding influence of sin. There is light enough—it is poured around men with noontide effulgence, but it is in vain because there is no spiritual perception. The blind man walks abroad amid the dazzling splendors of the meridian sun, but all is dark to him as midnight, because he has not the organs of vision. The impenitent sinner labors under a similar difficulty in a moral sense. The only difference is, in the first case, the difficulty is a physical one, and one, over which the

Blind man has no control; in the other, it is purely a voluntary one, and is pertinaciously cherished. Sinners "have eyes, but they see not, ears have they, but they hear not, neither do they understand." We may display before them the living beauties of Christianity, and they see in them neither form nor comeliness. We may strike the notes of David's lyre, and no holy thrills are felt within. We may prove, with the demonstration of Paul, the great reality of communion with God, but the argument does not compel the credence of the heart. Now this GREAT FACT in every sinner's moral condition, is one which should fill him with alarm. Is he walking thoughtlessly on the edge of a precipice? Yes. Does he see his danger? But very dimly. Is he liable every moment to sink into the pit, which burns with fire and brimstone? He is. Does he see his exposure? Scarcely at all. There is such an obtuseness of moral perception, that sights, which make devils tremble, awaken but little if any concern.

This obtuseness of moral vision is created by the unholy state of the affections. There is in the heart, not only no predisposition to understand the nature and admit the claims of vital religion, but an inveterate aversion to them.

A right state of the affections, is therefore of

the very first importance, as it regards a proper appreciation of divine things. Christianity requires "*experimental* conditions for the apprehension of its truth and evidence. Here, knowledge and insight are conditioned by the moral and practical state of the percipient. Christianity is a *remedy* for a diseased spiritual state, and *must be taken* before its efficacy can be truly seen and known."* A *practical trial* of Christianity is therefore indispensable to all satisfying insight of its nature. But, in the impenitent sinner's mind, the element of connection with holiness does not exist. In the language of the profound Pascal, "God alone can connect divine things with the soul. It is His ordination that they should enter from the *heart* into the *mind*, and not from the mind into the heart. Hence, while in order to love human things they must be known, we must *love* divine things in order to know them." In like manner St. Anselm observes, "I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I *believe in order* that I may understand. For he who has not believed, cannot have experienced, and he who has not experienced, cannot understand." This doubtless sounds strange and mystical to many minds, but Christ taught the same truth

* Literary and Theological Review, Vol. I. No. III.

when he said, "If any man will *do* his will, he shall know of the doctrine." "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, shall in no wise enter therein."

The only way then to understand the nature of vital religion is to *embrace* it. It must be a matter, not of speculation, but of *actual experience*. Our knowledge of the natural world even is principally gained by *experiment*. All the discoveries in chemistry and natural philosophy are the results of experiment. In like manner, if you would understand what genuine piety is, you must give it the trial of *inward experiment*, by giving your whole heart to God. Love God—*love God*, and then you will understand. Then, the "light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ" will shine upon you in full-orbed splendors; and though the light of the moon should be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun seven fold, yet the light of GOD'S COUNTENANCE will eclipse the whole.

Do you not then feel that you need something *more* to save you than you have yet experienced? Have you never met with some Christians, whose heavenly conversation, whose holy joys and sorrows, whose lively hopes and anticipations, whose deadness to the world and faith in God told you,

that they knew something about religion *beyond* what you have ever felt? Say not that they were persons of weak minds, and that their superior experience was nothing but enthusiasm. What if it should turn out, at the day of judgment, that their experience is the only kind that can save? What if it should then appear, that their peculiar feelings were the elementary feelings of heaven, and that the most you have ever felt absolutely *requires* your consignment to hell? What if it should then appear, that they are right, and you wrong? Be cautious, then, in stigmatizing their experience as fanatical. Having never felt the same, you are obviously unqualified to judge. Instead of flippantly pronouncing their experience delusion, humble your own understandings and hearts to a meek and cordial reception of the gospel; embrace the Saviour they have embraced; experience what they have experienced; and I might risk the universe, did I possess it, on the assertion, that you will change your opinion; and will exclaim, with the raptures of the new-born soul,—“If this be delusion, let me be deluded. I can well afford to be called enthusiastic myself. I know in whom I have believed. Jesus is mine and I am His, and that is enough.”

If the conviction has fastened itself on your

minds, that, after all your prepossessions to the contrary, vital religion *may be* a reality, we are prepared to proceed to a more particular consideration of the subject itself.

My object is to exhibit

Its *nature*,

Its *necessity*, and

The *motives* which should induce you immediately to embrace it.

I. The *nature* of vital piety. "My son, give me thy *heart*." Vital religion consists in an *entire change of the heart*. It consists in giving the affections supremely to God, and subordinately to man. It is a practical compliance with the requisitions of the moral law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." I know not how I can better illustrate the nature of this great and indispensable moral change, than by citing some examples. And the cases I will produce, shall be those of persons distinguished for soundness of mind, and for abhorrence of every thing which is enthusiastical.

The case of PRESIDENT EDWARDS, a man of gigantic intellectual strength, admirably illustrates the nature of this change. "From my childhood up," says he, "my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in

choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced and fully satisfied as to the sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure.

“The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since, was on reading these words, ‘*Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen.*’ As I read these words, there came into my soul, and was as it were diffused through it, a sense of the GLORY of the Divine Being; a new sense, quite different from any thing I ever experienced before. The sense I had of divine things would often, of a sudden, kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart; an ardor of soul, that I know not how to express. After this, my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of every thing was altered. God’s excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love seemed to appear in everything; in the sun, moon, and

stars ; in the clouds and blue sky ; in the grass, flowers, trees ; in the water and all nature. I spent most of my time in thinking of divine things, year after year ; often walking alone in the woods and solitary places for meditation, prayer and converse with God."

Take the case of COWPER, the poet. Describing the change in his mind, he remarks, " I found the cloud of horror, which had so long hung over me, was every moment passing away ; and every moment came fraught with hope. The happy period, which was to shake off my fetters, and afford me a clear opening of the free mercy of God in Christ Jesus, was now arrived. I flung myself into a chair near the window, and seeing a Bible there, ventured once more to apply to it for comfort and instruction. The first verse I saw was the 25th of the third chapter of Romans ;—*' Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.'* Immediately I received strength to believe, and the full beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon me. I perceived the sufficiency of the atonement he had made, my pardon sealed in his blood, and all the fullness and

completeness of his justification. In a moment I believed and received the gospel.

“ Unless the Almighty arm had been under me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder. To rejoice day and night was all my employment. Too happy to sleep much, I thought it was but lost time that was spent in slumber.”

ANDREW FULLER, in his youth, had frequent convictions of sin. “ One morning,” says he, “ I think in November, 1769, I walked out by myself with an unusual load of guilt upon my conscience. The remembrance of my sin, the breach of my vows, and the shocking termination of my former hopes and affections, all uniting together, formed a burden which I knew not how to bear. The reproaches of a guilty conscience seemed like the gnawing worm of hell. I do not write the language of exaggeration. I now know that the sense I then had of the evil of sin, and of the wrath of God, was very far short of the truth ; but yet it seemed more than I was able to sustain. I saw that God would be perfectly just in sending me to hell, and that to hell I must go, unless I were saved of mere grace, and as it were in spite

of myself. In this state of mind, I thought of the resolution of Job, '*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*' I paused, and repeated the words over and over. Each repetition seemed to kindle a ray of hope, mixed with a determination, *if I might*, to cast my perishing soul upon the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, to be both pardoned and purified. I now found rest to my troubled soul."

"SAMUEL J. MILLS," says his biographer, "was one of the most extraordinary characters America has produced. When about fifteen years of age, his attention was specially directed to the great concerns of his soul. For two full years, he continued in a state of anxiety, quarreling with the sovereignty of God, and often wishing that he had never been born. One morning, as he was about to leave home, to return to school in a neighboring town, his pious mother took an opportunity of inquiring into the state of his mind, and begged him to make an ingenuous disclosure of his feelings.

"For a moment he was silent, and wept; but his heart was too full long to suppress the emotions produced by so affecting a request. He raised his head, and with eyes streaming with tears, exclaimed, 'O that I had never been born! O that I had never been born! For two years I have

been sorry God ever made me.' What reply could such a mother make to such a disclosure? It was given her in that same hour what she should speak:—'My son,' said she, 'you *are* born, and you can never throw off your existence, nor your everlasting accountability for all your conduct.' This heavy thought was like a dagger to his soul. His mother expressed her fears that he had never thoroughly seen the evil of his own heart; to which he ventured to reply, '*I have seen*—to the very bottom of hell.'

"With this state of mind, he took a melancholy leave of his parents for the winter; and it was a day never to be forgotten in the life of Mr. Mills, nor in our recollection of those splendid schemes of benevolence, which characterized his subsequent history, and to which the events of this day bore so intimate a relation. What took place under his father's roof may be easily conjectured;—a scene, apparently of very little moment;—a scene, the world would scarcely deign to look at, but one on which God looks down with smiles;—a scene in which no prince or princess is the actor, but one in which princes might come down from their thrones to emulate,—a devout and humble woman, wrestling with the Angel of the covenant, and as a prince obtaining power to prevail!

“The farewell to his mother drove her to her knees. There is such a thing as special faith in prayer. It was such to this dear saint, when she went to plead for her poor son. She felt his sorrows and her own ; and God was pleased to show her that all her help was in him. She did not leave her closet, till she found the full relief she sought, and till her mind was confidently assured that God would remember mercy for her child. On that very morning, it pleased the Holy Ghost, as she afterwards ascertained, to knock off the chains from this unhappy prisoner, and introduce him into the liberty of the sons of God. He had not gone far, before he had such a view of the perfections of God, that he wondered he had never seen their beauty and glory before. There was nothing in God now which distressed him. He had lost all his opposition to the divine sovereignty, and such were his views of this adorable perfection, that he could not refrain from exclaiming, ‘O glorious sovereignty ! O glorious sovereignty !’ He retired a small distance into the woods, that he might be the more at liberty to contemplate the character of God, but here he saw so much of God, that his mind was almost lost in the overwhelming manifestation. The scene was altogether new. There was a wonderful change

either in God, or in him, and he knew it was in himself. Every thing was gilded with light and glory; and now and then, as he gazed at the splendor and majesty of the divine character, he would still exclaim, 'O glorious sovereignty.' Such is the *nature* of genuine religion."

I might extend this list of examples indefinitely; but let me now ask you, my youthful hearers, have you ever experienced anything of the kind? I do not ask, whether your experience has been as *marked* as those of the individuals just mentioned; but have you had *any* of their new and delightful views of God, and *any* of their deep self-abasement for sin?

Let us now consider,

II. The *necessity* of this great moral change.

I argue its necessity from *the elements of eternal wretchedness and ruin, which exist in your own bosoms*. The moral feelings of every unrenewed sinner are utterly wrong. They contain the principle of rebellion against God. This principle may be active or it may be dormant, but whether active or dormant, it truly *exists* in every unhumiliated heart. God has only to put you into circumstances which will powerfully excite and elicit your moral feelings, (and he can do it in the twinkling of an eye,) and that principle of re-

bellion will assume a most palpable and terrible activity. Should He take off restraint, and let loose your conscience upon you, your heart would be hell in miniature. You would exclaim with Milton's fiend ;—

“ Me miserable ! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair ?
Which way I fly is Hell ; *myself am Hell* ;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me, opens wide.”

The elements of perdition exist then in every unsanctified heart.

Now I urge the necessity of a change of your hearts on the ground that you are *sentient* beings, capable of suffering and enjoying beyond what flesh and blood can sustain. I urge it on the ground that you are *immortal* beings, and, as such, must suffer or enjoy the extremes of wo or bliss forever. I urge it on the ground that you are *accountable* beings, and have *no right* to destroy yourselves. The suicide has *no right* to take his own life ; and you have *no right* to “destroy both soul and body in hell.” You pervert the great end of your creation, if you do not become Christians. You destroy an amount of happiness which no created mind can estimate, if you continue to choose the way to death.

I beseech you, then, to be immediately reconciled to God, by that *smothered principle of evil* in your own bosoms, which, if death should take place, will instantly ignite and

“out-burn Vesuvius.”

Again, I argue the necessity of a radical change of heart from the fact, that all *real Christians ascribe their hopes entirely to such a change in themselves*. There are no real Christians between the poles but attribute their hopes of heaven to a renovation of the heart. Pious ancestry, intellectual refinement, baptism, honesty, generosity, kindness, convictions, prayers, tears, they feel to be valueless as grounds of hope. They know that their feelings before regeneration partook, in no degree, of that “holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.” Their hearts have been transformed by “the renewing of the Holy Ghost,” and it is on this ground only, that they permit themselves to hope for heaven. Their deliberate judgment, arising from their own experience, is, that no person can safely hope for salvation who has not been born again.

Now, why will you not believe their testimony? They are credible witnesses. You would believe them on any other subject. Why not on this?

If actual *experience* of any fact affords any advantages for judging and adds any weight to judgment, then the testimony of Christians to the necessity of regeneration, ought, on every principle of fair reasoning, to be admitted as decisive. "Marvel not," then, "that I say unto you, ye must be born again."

This necessity further appears from the *nature of heavenly happiness*. All the happiness of heaven consists in its holiness. The thoughts, affections and employments of all its inhabitants are perfectly holy. The honors, pleasures and emoluments of this world have no existence there. No glorified spirit would consent to lose a ray of the Redeemer's countenance for all the fame, and wealth, and pleasure of this lower world.

Now, who does not see the *utter incompatibility* of the feelings of the unrenewed heart with those which reign in heaven? Who does not see that, with such a heart, heaven cannot be *enjoyed*? Indeed, who does not see that, with such a heart, heaven must be *abhorred*? The element of connection between the two things does not exist; but on the contrary, there is between them a principle of violent and eternal repellency.

And yet, the unconverted sinner hopes to go to heaven. He may imagine a heaven above the

sky which will suit the feelings of his heart; but it is as unlike the heaven of the Bible, as a Grecian elysium or a Mohammedan paradise. The felicity of a *holy* heaven can never be enjoyed by an unholy heart. Hence, the necessity of a total change in the moral temper of the heart.

But *Jesus Christ* has settled the point, that this change is indispensable to salvation. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

Here, then, I rest the argument for the necessity of a change of the heart. All the experience of men, in three worlds, proves it; and He, who hath the "keys of the kingdom of heaven," demands the change as the condition of admittance.

III. The *motives*, which should induce you to become Christians, are numerous and cogent. But few of them can now be presented.

1. The *unparalleled importance of the subject itself* should move you to action. If a change of heart be necessary to salvation, who can be indifferent respecting it? This congregation of immortal youth, sitting in judgment on the question, whether they will give their hearts to Christ or not, is a spectacle which interests the universe. The question you are to decide is, whether you will be saved or damned; and it is a question of such overwhelming import, that it "might convulse the abyss and move the thrones of heaven." A question, involving such wide and interminable extremes, can be pondered and decided only while you are in this world of probation. The question, in its importance, admits of no parallel; for there are no such enrapturing ecstasies as those of heaven, and no such insupportable despair as that of hell.

And can it be, my young friends, that you are to-day settling a question which involves so much? Can it be, that the lapse of one more hour may determine it forever? I beseech you, then, to decide for God and for heaven. Throw not away your souls. Put not away from you everlasting life. Choose not for your portion everlasting death. Decide right, and decide now.

2. The *uncertainty and brevity of life* should

excite you to instant duty. "What is your life? It is even a vapor, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Your "days are swifter than a post;" they are like "the weaver's shuttle." Yesterday, perhaps, you wove your winding-sheet; to-day, insidious disease may be finding the way to your heart-strings. Your companions, too, are falling around you, like the leaves of autumn. Summons after summons, like successive peak of thunder, is sounding in your ears. Think not that "all are mortal but yourselves." Very shortly *your* turn will come. Prepared or unprepared, there will be no respite.

Now, by the utter uncertainty and extreme brevity of life, I pray you to "prepare to meet your God." You know not what a day may bring forth. You have no lease of life for an hour or moment.

"The spider's most attenuated thread
Is *cord*, is *CABLE* to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze."

O, the superlative folly of that youth, who procrastinates repentance! "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

3. Your *peace of conscience* requires immediate reconciliation to God. That person must have

very little knowledge of himself and of divine truth, or must be given over to hardness of heart, who feels no compunctious visitings while living in sin. Most youth, who have been religiously educated, are much under the influence of conscience. It often fills them with disquietude and alarm. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."

"Guiltiness will speak, though tongues were out of use."

The bosom of many a sober, moral youth is often the theatre of any thing but repose. "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."

Here then is a mirror, in which you may look far into your own heart, and see the mingling elements of that storm which sometimes rages there. How dire the wreck of serenity and joy! How irksome, and restless, and agitated is all within! And can you be content to writhe all your life under the dagger of remorse? Do not the chills of despair, like the waves of the sea, chase one another over your frames, when you think of your present and prospective condition? In some paroxysms of mental agony, is not the inquiry extorted, "What must I do to be saved?" I answer, You must be *reconciled to God*. This war in your conscience is a war with your Maker.

You must submit or perish. You must throw down the weapons of your rebellion, and become the cordial subjects of the Prince of peace, or all the attributes of the OMNIPOTENT are pledged for your destruction.

I will plead with you to become Christians by one motive more.

4. You are in danger of *grieving the Holy Spirit by delay*. Jehovah says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." There is a limit beyond which the Holy Spirit will strive with you no more. You are dependent on his regenerating influences for salvation. Will you then trifle on, till you pass that limit where those influences will forever cease? Perhaps you are this moment nearing that line. Perhaps, this moment, angels and devils are gathering round, anxious for the result. Trepidation may be felt in other worlds for the decision you are about to make.

Immortal youth! pause and consider. Take not another step in the road to perdition. Is not the Spirit of God now moving on your hearts? Do you say, that you know not whether you ever felt his operations?

"Sinner, hath not a voice within,
Oft whispered to thy secret soul,
Urg'd thee to leave the ways of sin,
And yield thy heart to God's control?"

Hath nothing met thee in the path
Of worldliness and vanity,
And pointed to the coming wrath,
And warn'd thee from that wrath to *flee*?

Sinner, it was a heavenly voice,—
It was the *Spirit's gracious call*;
It bade thee make the better choice
And haste to seek in Christ thine all."

Perhaps his last call is now sounding in the chambers of your conscience. Listen—believe—give your hearts to Jesus,—and you will soon find yourselves in a new world. The heavens and the earth will be gilded with the glory of God. Your souls will beat in delightful unison with the symphonies of his holy creation, and you will then begin to live.

See the spirit and conduct of the newly converted youth.

"He walks with God,
Surveys far on the endless line of life;
Values his soul; thinks of eternity;
Both world's considers, and provides for both;
With reason's eye his passions guards; abstains
From evil; lives on hope, on hope, the fruit
Of faith; looks upward; purifies his soul;
Expands his wings, and mounts into the sky;
Passes the sun, and gains his father's house,
And drinks with angels from the fount of bliss."

LECTURE VIII.

LIFE OF ACTIVE USEFULNESS.

2 Cor. v. 15.—And he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.

“WHAT is the chief end of man? Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.” This noble sentiment ought not only to be committed to memory by every youth, but to be indelibly engraven on his heart. It is melancholy to notice, what a wide waste of talent, and intelligence, and influence, most men in all ages have been guilty of, by not understanding and pursuing the great and only proper object of life. If the “chief end of man,” or the great object of life, be to “glorify God” and to become prepared to “enjoy him forever,” then the conduct of a vast majority of mankind is stamped with superlative folly. For it is most manifest, that, not only the Cains, and the Sauls, and the Jero-

boams, and Pilates, and Alexanders, and Attilas, and Cæsars, and Napoleons, and Humes, and Voltaires, and Robespierres, but thousands of millions of others, less conspicuous for iniquity, have not made it their supreme object to "please God," and to "enjoy him" here and hereafter. Indeed, the great mass of men seem to suppose, that they were sent into the world merely to accumulate property, to gain renown, and to enjoy sensual pleasure. Their objects are purely selfish. They are living "*unto themselves.*" They seem to have no higher views of the object of life, than the gratification of *self*, in some of its forms. The horizon of their views is narrowed down to the diminutive circumference of their own selfish interests.

It is perfectly evident from the Scriptures, that the indulgence of such contracted notions of the great end of our being, is a *perversion* of the object for which our Creator made us. There is perhaps nothing more important to persons just entering upon active life, than distinctly to understand the reason *why they were made*. If they were made merely to eat and to drink, and to rise up to play,—if they were created merely to decorate their bodies in the most fashionable style, and live in the richest palaces, and roll in the

most splendid equipages, and to be deemed wealthier and more honorable than others, then they should know it. But if they were created for a far higher and nobler end ; if they are heirs of immortality ; if they sustain, and ever will sustain the most important relations to all intelligent beings and to God, then, they should know that.

In bringing to a close the Course of Lectures, to which you have listened with so much candor and indulgence, and I would fain hope not entirely without profit, I know not what can be more appropriate, than to recommend to you a

LIFE OF ACTIVE USEFULNESS.

Such a life will be a fulfilment of the great design of your creation. All the preceding lectures have been designed to bear upon this point. It has been my purpose to throw out such suggestions for your consideration, as would tend to form your characters for the highest possible degree of usefulness. Particularly has it been desired, to induce you all, without one exception, to become *Christians* ; for the "Christian is the highest style of man"—highest in excellence, highest in usefulness, and reflects the brightest glory upon your Creator and Redeemer. "He died for all, that they which live, should not

henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again."

According to the text, your highest usefulness in life will consist in *living unto Christ*—in promoting the great interests of his kingdom in the world. Your attention is therefore invited

To what constitutes the *basis* of the greatest usefulness ;

To your *obligations* to live such a life ;

To the *encouragements* to do it ; and

To the *results* of supreme devotedness to Christ.

I. What constitutes the *basis* of the greatest usefulness in life ?

Good native and acquired abilities are highly necessary. By good natural abilities, I mean just such as almost every youth possesses. That respectable measure of talent, which is generally enjoyed, is far more useful than occasional prodigies of genius. Splendid genius falls to the lot of but few, and is rarely distinguished for usefulness, because it is often associated with some eccentricity, equally splendid. Those minds which have exerted the widest and most beneficent influence on the world, have generally been those, which were nearly as far removed from

transcendent genius on the one hand, as from imbecility on the other.

More ordinarily depends on intellectual *acquisitions* than on native talent. Industry and habits of close application are indispensable to a life of distinguished usefulness. But it is not my design to dwell on this point, because it was presented to you somewhat at large on a former occasion.

Practical wisdom, also, lies at the foundation of the most useful life. This implies a quick perception of the springs of human action—a deep knowledge of mankind—the faculty of reasoning soundly, or of drawing just conclusions from given premises—a nice discernment of what is proper and improper, of what is right and wrong—and a skillful adaptation of means to accomplish proposed ends. A person distinguished for practical wisdom is but rarely, if ever, guilty of those little weaknesses and indiscretions, which blight the usefulness of multitudes, and which make you feel it to be somewhat unsafe to adopt their opinions, or to be governed by their advice. The cultivation of this important trait of character, or rather of this happy combination of mental qualities, cannot commend itself too forcibly to your attention.

But the principal ingredient in a highly useful

life, and which I feel more anxious that you should possess than any other and all others, is *eminent piety*. That men entirely devoid of piety are often, in various degrees, the benefactors of their race, is cheerfully admitted. But the whole history of the world shows, that men of sound religious principle and of piety have generally performed the most labor, and made the greatest sacrifices of ease and property, and health and life, for the promotion of the best interests of the human kind. It is only the man, who has learned the worth of his own soul, who feels much for the souls of others. It is only the man, who has fled from the city of Destruction, who sees the danger of remaining there. It is only the man, who has lost his load of sin at the Cross, who sees the immense burden of guilt under which others are laboring. It is only the man, who has fallen into the hands of giant Despair, who has had any taste of the agonies of perdition. It is only the man, who has ascended the Delectable Mountains and taken a near view of heaven, who feels a burning desire to elevate a suffering world to the felicity of that abode.

But there are various grades even in the piety of Christians, and their usefulness is ordinarily measured by the degree of their spiritual attain-

ments. They are like the lights in the firmament, differing in magnitude, and of course, in splendor. It is a fact which ought to clothe the church in sackcloth, that the great mass of her members have acquired so little of the spirit of their Master, and have "*lived*" so little "unto Him." Their formal, fitful, periodical piety has done comparatively but little to bless the world. Who are the men, who, in all ages of the church, have done the most for her advancement? They are her Abrahams, and Nehemiahs, and Pauls, and Luthers, and Baxters, and Brainerds, men of the highest personal attainments in holiness, men who habitually walked with God. These, and other similar choice spirits, though few in number, have perhaps done more for the world and for the Saviour, than the undistinguished million of his professed but undevoted friends. Other things being equal, they, who are most humble, fervent, holy, are the most widely useful. Men of this stamp have wrought those miracles of love and mercy which have exalted the ages in which they lived, and the record of which will endure longer than the sun and the moon.

And what is necessary now to banish from the earth intemperance, profaneness, Sabbath-breaking, lewdness, duelling, murder, slavery, war; in short,

those legions of evils which afflict humanity? Nothing but the spirit of apostolic Christianity in the church. And what is necessary to diffuse universally light, and intelligence, and peace, and brotherly-love, and salvation; and to transform this world into another Eden, and breathe over it the zephyrs, and pour around it the radiance, and inspire it with the transports of the Millennium? Nothing but religion enough. And to whom shall we look, under God, to usher in a consummation so devoutly to be wished? To the *aged*, who will to-morrow sink into the grave? No. To the *middle aged*, whose piety, low as it is, has nearly reached its maximum? No. To the *youth*, whose very existence should be baptized into the spirit of Christ, and who can yet attain a character for moral elevation, and symmetry, and power, such as the world has never seen? Yes. *This* is the generation which is to fight the battles of the Lord of hosts, and to occupy the very Thermopylæ of the conflict between the powers of light and darkness. O, what a measure of piety do you need to fulfil the destiny to which you are summoned!

Christians, generally, seem to have caught scarcely a glimpse of that *degree* of piety, which is indispensable to the conversion of the world.

Their formality, and worldliness, and unbelief must be entirely displaced by a degree of spirituality, which shall equal that of primitive times. They need a far higher degree of piety to *bear* success, as well as to secure it. They need habitually to feel that high and extreme tension of anxiety of souls, which "the nature of the human mind forbids to be more," and the importance of the subject forbids to be less. And, at the same time, their zeal needs to be the most enlightened, the most chastened, and the best directed. The piety, which is requisite to convert the world, needs as much to be well balanced and symmetrical, as to be ardent. But how little of this piety there is in the church ! And how little are Christians trying to cultivate it, while whole generations of men are sweeping down the current of life into the ocean of a hopeless eternity ! But this is the piety which forms the basis of the most eminently useful lives. Let it be your daily effort to cultivate it in yourselves and in others.

II. You are under solemn *obligations* to live a life of the greatest possible usefulness. These obligations principally arise from *Christ's redeeming love*. "He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him, which died for them, and rose again."

He died for *you*. He had his eye on *you*, in the agonies of Gethsemane. He thought of *you*, while hanging on the cross. *Your sins* drove the nails and impelled the spear. *Your sins* brought over his mind that cloud of horror which made him exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And when the scene was closing, the last pulsations of his heart were *for you*, and then—all was still.

He died, that you might live. And as many of you as, through his death, have been quickened into spiritual life by the Holy Ghost, are forever bound to live, not unto yourselves, but unto Him. You owe your hopes, and joys, and prospects all to Him.

"O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be,
Let that grace now like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee."

The promotion of his kingdom in the world, you should therefore regard as the great object for which you were born. Nothing else comparatively is worth living for a moment. This is the greatest and the best of causes. It is the one which will soon swallow up every other. Happy is the youth whose enjoyments are identified with

its prosperity, but wo be to him who opposes its progress. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever *it* shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

You are also under obligation to live a life of the highest usefulness, on account of the *facilities* afforded you for doing it. Circumstances often create duty. Your means of doing good are far superior to those of the youth who lived in the dark ages, or who are now living in China, or in South America, or even in Great Britain. You live in a free and happy land;—in a land of light and unexampled enterprise,—in a land of benevolent institutions which are scattering the blessings of education and piety over every section of the country, and which are reaching their hands around the globe, and presenting the lamp of salvation to the benighted dwellers on the other side. If you offer up one "effectual fervent prayer," the influence is quickly felt from the equator to the poles. If you insert a paragraph in the newspapers containing a new and important thought, that thought may soon circulate in different languages to the ends of the earth. If you have a dollar to give, you can place a Bible in a family of pagans, and as the parents and children collect around it to read, or listen to the story of the

Saviour, they unitedly exclaim, "this is what we want;" and their idols are thrown "to the moles and to the bats," and hope springs up within them as they "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." If you assist in sending a band of missionaries to a heathen land, as they disembark and ascend the hills to view the scene of their future labors, and as the inhabitants are collecting from all directions to receive them, you will hear a new song, bursting from hundreds of voices, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings, that publish peace, that bring good tidings of good, that publish salvation, that saith unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth.'"

The youth who has a heart to do good finds no lack of opportunity. Numerous facilities are already within his reach, and new ones are constantly opening around him. This state of things imposes obligation. "To whom much is given, of them will much be required." He who has ten talents is bound so to employ them as to gain ten talents more. Never was there a generation of young men and young females, which could do so much for Christ and his cause. You enjoy the day, which kings and prophets desired to see; a day of all others the most favorable for exerting a wide moral influence.

Coming upon the stage of action with these unprecedented facilities and means of usefulness, you are bound to make the most of life. Your obligations to live for Christ and the world can be measured only by your ability. "She hath done *what she could*," was a splendid eulogium pronounced by our Lord on a female friend, and it marked at once the extent of her obligation and the degree of her devotedness. Ability, and ability only, is the measure of your obligation. Cheerfully, then, offer yourselves and all you possess a sacrifice to Christ upon the altar of duty. But,

III. What are some of the *encouragements* to lead a life of usefulness?

One is, there is *enough to be done*. "The field is the world." Here is scope for your most enlarged philanthropy. The generous mind loves to have enough to do. Now there is very much in the social, the political, and the religious conditions of the world which needs reform. Indeed, there is but little in any of these conditions, which is now right. The reform must be radical, in the good sense of the word. More than the strength of Hercules is necessary to cleanse this world of its impurities. The blessings of education need to be universally diffused. The personal and

domestic relations of life require special improvement. A general and thorough reformation of morals is demanded. An universal and conscientious regard to the rights and happiness of others, and to the will and glory of God, is imperatively required.

Now, to work a reformation of such intrinsic difficulty and wide extent—to re-mould nearly all the maxims, and opinions, and principles of men—to re-cast almost the entire framework of human society—to form every thing on the basis of the word of God—and to prepare the world for the latter day glory and especially for heaven ;—this, *this* is the enterprise, which the youth of this generation are called to prosecute.

Another great encouragement is the *favorable concurrence of providential events*. It has been said, with equal felicity and truth, that “ the Greeks would have conquered the Persians without Alexander,—that the Romans would have been enslaved, had Cæsar never been born,—and that the Arabians would have been deceived by other impostors, if Mohammed had never existed.” But why ? Because the tide of events, in each case, ran in favor of just such a result as did actually occur. The existing state of society was such as necessarily to bring about the results which

did take place, unless arrested by the direct interposition of the Almighty.

In like manner, the present age exhibits the most striking and unparalleled *concurrence of events*, tending directly, as it would seem, to work out the moral regeneration of the world. The concurring circumstances are such as these ;— *public expectation*, like that which ushered in the advent of the Redeemer, anticipates and favors a great moral revolution in the state of the world ; the *missionary cast* given to the *education of children* throughout Christendom, baptizing them, as no preceding generation has been, in the very spirit of engagedness for the world's conversion ;— the numerous *voluntary associations* formed for the direct purpose of diffusing the gospel, containing within themselves the elements of self-preservation to the end of time, adapting themselves to all the varieties of human want, capable of commanding the most inexhaustible resources, and already wielding an amount of influence which moves the globe ;—the *wide and increasing diffusion of the English language*, that vast store-house of Christian truth, richer than all other languages in the means of evangelical instruction, and insuring, by its spread, the spread of the Bible ;— the *commercial activity* of Great Britain and the

United States, the two most Christian nations of the earth ;—the *numerous emigrations* from these countries to every part of the world, which necessarily tend to the wide diffusion of the true faith ;—the *unexampled multiplication of copies of the Bible* by means of the press ;—the *dispersion of the Jews* among the nations of the earth, holding as they do, with proverbial tenacity, the doctrine of the *Unity of God*, and prepared, by their universal presence, when they themselves shall embrace the Messiah, to exert a powerful influence in subverting polytheism ;—the triumphant progress of the *temperance reformation*, removing some of the principal obstacles to the spread of the gospel ;—and finally, *the unparalleled effusions of the Holy Spirit*, multiplying converts to Christianity almost like the drops of the morning.

Such are some of the conspiring causes, which are operating the most salutary changes in human affairs. And, can you, my young friends, in your efforts to enlighten and save the world, ask the co-operation of more powerful agencies ? Can you desire stronger supports of your faith, or incitements of your zeal ?

You may also derive great encouragement from the *comparative ease*, with which *public opinion* on

any point of morals is now corrected. Public sentiment rules the world, and time has been, when it seemed as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Moral influences were nearly stagnant, and little could be done in the work of reform. But the scene has changed. Moral influences are now active and numerous, and can be easily concentrated and made to bear, with tremendous energy, upon any given abuse. As illustrations of this, I refer you, among other things, to the increasing unpopularity of *war*. Not long since, nations, for the most trivial reasons, would plunge into the guilt and horrors of this wholesale butchery of their species; but public sentiment now frowns upon that practice, and the consequence is, that most civilized nations are reluctant to decide their controversies by an appeal to arms, but prefer their settlement by the arbitration of a third power.

A few years ago, the *slave-trade* was prosecuted with vigor by nearly every nation in Christendom. But, by the efforts of Clarkson, Wilberforce and others, public sentiment has become so enlightened and reformed, that many of those very nations have pronounced that traffic to be piracy and punish it accordingly.

A short time since, *intemperance* rolled its

waves of "distilled damnation" over the fairest portions of the world ; and though the deluge has not yet entirely died away, a rectified public sentiment has reared an effectual barrier against its power, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

You may labor, then, for a general and thorough reformation of morals, with this inspiring conviction, that public opinion can with comparative ease be reformed, and made to bring its resistless energies to your help.

But the crowning encouragement to a life of usefulness is the *certainty of success*. God has indissolubly joined the effect to the means. Do you pray ? He has said, that praying breath shall not be spent in vain. Do you labor ? He has said, that your "labor shall not be in vain in the Lord." Do you give your substance ? He has said, you "shall in no wise lose your reward." No efforts, put forth with right motives to build up his kingdom, can prove abortive. Good will be done. The world will be converted. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." There is no cause in which you can labor with such certainty of success. Disappointment here is impossible. God

has promised to convert the world, and has pledged all the resources of his Omnipotence to redeem his promise. "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His word shall not pass away." Here, then, is the supreme encouragement to live and to labor for Christ and his cause.

Let us contemplate,

IV. Some of the particular *results* of a life of supreme devotedness to Christ.

1. It will produce a state of *elevated religious enjoyment*. Go almost where you will in the churches and you will hear the complaint, "We have but little holy consolation and peace." Over nothing, perhaps, are so many tears shed by multitudes of professed Christians, as the withdrawment of the divine presence from their souls. Much of their time they walk in darkness, and they have walked in darkness so long, that they regard deliverance to be nearly hopeless. They almost expect to live and to die under the cloud. They perhaps can recollect the time, when the candle of the Lord shined brightly upon their tabernacle—when God was enjoyed, and their days and nights were full of peace. But that holy, halcyon season has long since passed away, and gloom, and wretch-

edness, and tears are now their meat and their drink.

Now, it is evident, that this state of mind is not only quite common, but most deplorable. In primitive times, religion was a matter of habitual and high *enjoyment*. Its consolations were ever present in seasons of trial. And so it is now with that class of Christians, who live devoted to their Lord. Why was it that Paul could say, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain?" Because his was a life of supreme devotedness to Jesus. Why was it that Latimer, when enveloped in the flames of martyrdom, could say to Ridley, his companion at the stake, "Be of good cheer, brother, we shall this day light such a candle in England, as, I trust in God, shall never go out?" Because a life of simple, entire consecration to Christ had prepared him for that hour. A missionary of the cross, who was embarking from our shores to go and spend his life in the isles of the Pacific, said to the speaker, as he "accompanied him to the ship," "Go and tell my brethren at the theological seminary, that this is the *happiest day of my life*." O, if Christians would live devotedly to their Master, their harps would no longer hang on the willows, the light of God's countenance would return, and their "peace

would be as a river, and their righteousness as the waves of the sea."

"Heaven waits not the last moment, owns her friends
On this side death, and points them out to men."

2. Eminent devotedness will result in the *conversion of many souls*. "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit, then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." The tone of piety in the soul ordinarily determines the extent of one's usefulness. Harlan Page, by his ever-living, warm-hearted piety, was the honored instrument of converting a great number of individuals. His piety was of that active, practical character, which sought to bring the Gospel to bear on the conscience of any and every person to whom he could gain access. His affectionate, solemn and pathetic appeals to the consciences of *individuals* was the secret of his success; and he could make such appeals, because his views of the danger of sinners were rendered absorbing and overwhelming by his steady contemplation of eternal scenes. Brainerd's success among the Indians was never so astonishing, as when he was "dwelling on the sides of eternity." That degree of piety in Christians, which makes them relinquish their

hold on the honors, pleasures and emoluments of this life, and sets them apart exclusively to the service of God, exerts a surprising influence in bringing sinners to Jesus, wakes up louder anthems in heaven, and plants new gems in their eternal crowns.

3. Supreme devotedness will give a *new impulse to the missionary enterprise*. At the present rate of proceeding, there is but little prospect that the world will ever be converted. A much higher degree of faith, and zeal, and benevolence is indispensable to success. Christians, generally, have not yet taken hold of the work in earnest. So long as they can be *contented*, and see the cause of God remain nearly stationary, so long will but little be done. But when they become so deeply imbued with the spirit of Christianity themselves, that it is *essential to their happiness* to see the cause rapidly advance, then prayer, and men, and money will no longer be wanting.

There have been some few Christians who possessed this degree of devotedness, and their influence is felt around the globe. Carey possessed it, when, with holy magnanimity of soul, he said to his brethren who were projecting a mission to the East,—“*Attempt great things, expect great things.*” Harriet Newell possessed

it, when she penned her decision to become a missionary,—

“The sultry climes of India then I’ll choose,
There will I toil and sinners’ bonds unloose,
There will I live and spend my latest breath,
And in my Jesus’ service meet a stingless death.”

Paul felt it when he said, “What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to *die* at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

And there are some living examples of supreme devotedness. They are that class of Christians, who hold all they possess sacredly consecrated to the cause of God, and who “count not their lives dear unto themselves” if they may but rescue sinners from perdition. O, that their spirit may soon pervade the whole church! Then will her “righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth.”

4. Entire devotedness to Christ will prepare you for *peace in death*. A devoted, holy life is, in almost every case, followed by a peaceful, if not a triumphant departure. “Them that honor me,” saith God, “I will honor.” There is not a more delightful spectacle below the sun, than to see a Christian, who has honestly and entirely

devoted himself to God, rising to those Pisgah heights of joy, which give token that he will soon take his mansion near the throne. There, "the praises and censures of men die away upon the ear, and the still small voice of conscience is no longer drowned by the din of this nether world. Here, the sight is apt to be occupied by earthly objects, and the hearing to be engrossed with earthly sounds; but there, he has come within the view of the resplendent and incorruptible crown, which is held forth to his acceptance in the realms of light, and his ear is regaled with heavenly melody. Here, we dwell in a variable atmosphere;—the prospect is at one time darkened by the gloom of disgrace, and, at another, the eye is dazzled by the gleamings of glory; but he has now ascended above this inconstant region; no storms agitate; no clouds obscure the air; and the lightnings play and the thunders roll beneath him." *

See the end of the late lamented and devoted Payson. See him dating the last letter he ever dictated at the "land of Beulah"

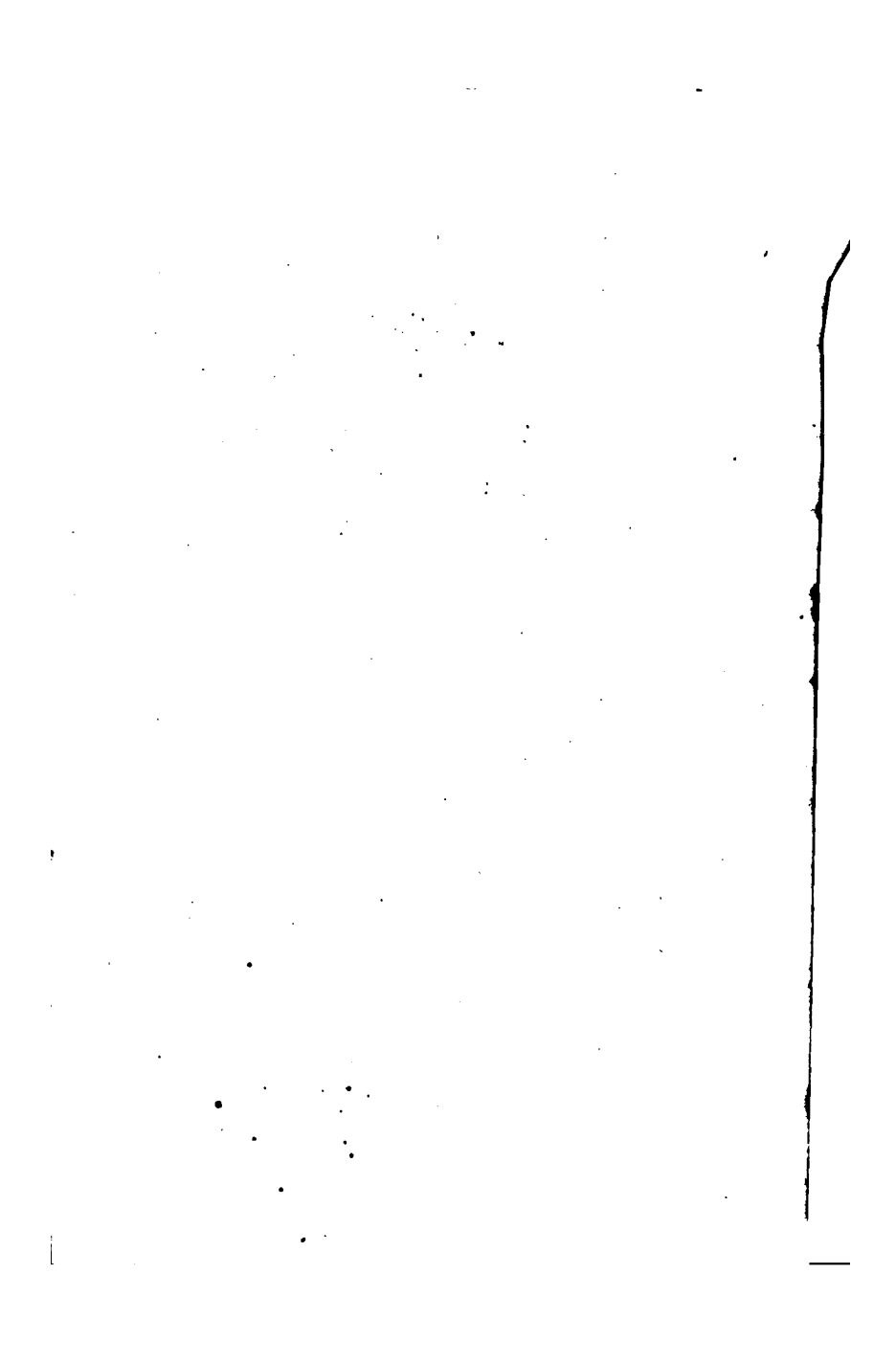
"Quite on the verge of heaven;"

* Wilberforce's Practical View.

and hear him saying, "The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step, whenever God shall give permission. The Sun of Righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached, and now he fills the whole hemisphere; pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float as an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to smile upon a sinful worm."

Are you ready to exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?" Then, *live for Christ*, **LIVE FOR CHRIST**. Thus your sun will set in glory. Amid the tremblings, and sinkings, and gaspings of dissolution, ineffable peace will fill your souls; and you will ascend to the abode of the redeemed—and be clothed in white robes wrought in the manufactory of the skies—and receive your unfading crowns—and join the song of heaven,

breaking from the voices of "ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands," rising and swelling into one universal chorus, and rolling on through the cycle of eternity with ever increasing alleluias "unto Him that sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb."



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